2 The Concept and Characteristics of War in Primitive Societies

2.1 Introduction

Etymologically, the term 'war' is derived from Old High German *werra*, signifying confusion, discord or strife. War is a species of the genus of violence; more specifically, it is collective, direct, manifest, personal, intentional, organized, institutionalized, instrumental, sanctioned, and sometimes ritualized and regulated, violence. These distinguishing features and dimensional delineations are not limitative. It should be perfectly clear, however, that war, or the state of belligerence, is a very special category of macro-level violence (van der Dennen, 1977; 1981). Many researchers have emphasized the continuity of violence with other political methods, and have agreed with the Clausewitzian adage that "War is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse with an admixture of other means".

Diametrically opposed to the vista of peace and war as a bipolar continuum, is the view of a sharp and clear-cut borderline existing between the two conditions, thus implying a boundary transgression in the transition from one state of affairs to the other: "Inter bellum et pacem nihil medium" (Cicero).

Generally, war has been conceptualized as (1) a socio-political phenomenon; and (2) a judicial or legal phenomenon. According to the first conceptualization, war, in principle, can only take place between sovereign political entities (tribes, fiefs, nation-states, empires, etc.). According to the judicial conception, war is "a legal condition which equally permits two or more hostile groups to carry on a conflict by armed force" (Q.Wright, 1942; 1965). Those who stress the legal aspects of war also maintain that a belligerent status implies sovereignty. A struggle can be considered a war only if the contenders are sovereign political units (Cf. Lider, 1977).

According to many cultural anthropologists, the anthropological literature illuminates the difficulties of setting definitional boundaries around such concepts as 'war' and 'violence'. These difficulties are twofold. First, the terms express cultural categories; and, secondly, even as cultural categories warfare and violence are not phenomena *sui generis*; they occur as part of many kinds of social relationships and cultural forms (Greenhouse, 1987).

A number of anthropologists distinguish 'war' from 'warfare'. While warfare refers specifically to the process or activity of battle, war refers more broadly to the institution (e.g., Nettleship, 1975) or to the entire system, not only military,
through which hostilities are sustained (e.g., Wintrop, 1991).

### 2.2 Quantitative Criteria in the Definition of War

If we take the view that war is simply one form of political intercourse, how do we know when the line dividing nonviolent conflict from violence has been crossed? One attempt to fix the threshold quantitatively was made by Richardson (1960) who tried to arrange all 'deadly quarrels' on a continuum of violent conflict ranging from one killed (murder) to ten million killed. The threshold of war was crossed when deaths went over 1,000. Singer & Small (1972) and Deutsch & Senghaas (1973) call 'war' any series of events that meets the following three criteria: (1) Size: It results in at least 1,000 battle deaths (not counting the indirect casualties); (2) Preparation: It has been prepared in advance, and/or is being maintained by large-scale social organizations; and (3) Legitimation: It is legitimized by an established governmental or quasi-governmental organization, so that large-scale killing is viewed not as a crime but as a duty. For the student of primitive warfare, it is obvious that for band- or tribe-level societies, the criterion of size is hardly ever met. Yet this should not present a problem, if one considers the round figure of 1,000 battle deaths as totally arbitrary and applicable only to contemporary wars. For primitive war the figure may either be proportionally reduced or the criterion of size eliminated altogether as irrelevant. The relevance of the other criteria for primitive war will be considered in the following paragraphs.

### 2.3 Concepts and Definitions of 'Primitive' War

Whether or not one accepts war as being as old as mankind, Harrison (1973) points out, is partially a matter of how one defines the concept. If within the framework of the definition are included those sporadic acts of violence that erupt into and maintain feuds between families or the small egalitarian bands that lack definite leadership (which must have been characteristic of social groups of early man), then warfare may indeed be as old as mankind itself. If, on the other hand, one insists that acts of hostility, in order to be defined as acts of war, must exhibit some form of leadership and some planning, as well as the use of armed force, then feuds as such could not be included within the domain of the concept of warfare. Warfare, thereby, would be seen as a social activity whose genesis arose later in time than the development of the species itself. It would have had to have been the result of activities or conditions related to the procession of man's sociocultural evolution (Harrison, 1973; Lider, 1977).
Bernard (1944) proposed an all-purpose definition of war, which clearly encompasses primitive war: "War is organized continuous conflict of a transient character between or among collectivities of any sort capable of arming and organizing themselves for violent struggle carried on by armies in the field (or naval units on water) and supported by civil or incompletely militarized populations back of the battle areas constituted for the pursuit of some fairly well-defined public or quasi-public objective". Malinowski (1941) defined war as "an armed contest between two independent political units, by means of organized military force, in pursuit of a tribal or national policy". Similarly, Otterbein (1970) defines war as "armed combat between political communities" whereby a political community is understood to be a "a group of people whose membership is defined in terms of occupancy of a common territory and who have an official with a special function of announcing group decisions - a function exercised at least once a year" (Naroll, 1964). Riches (1987) understands war to be "the authorised employment of physical force against other persons, as a means by which groups competing for control of public resources and benefits attempt to influence the outcome of the competition in their favour". This definition leaves as unspecified the identity and boundaries of the groups concerned, but implies that their structure is corporate. War, after all, implies a considerable number of participants and a subtle synchronization of their behaviors (Meyer, 1990) which necessitates some discernible organization.

These definitions contain the crucial and critical concepts of (1) armed combat; (2) political community; (3) organization; and (4) some form of group sanction for the implementation of collective policies vis-à-vis similar units operating in the same environment. These definitional components will be examined in more detail below.

Definitions emphasizing the 'political community' have been formulated by Huber (1975) and Tefft (1975) (Cf. Q.Wright, 1942; 1968; Berndt, 1964; Winthrop, 1991). A minor variant is Ember & Ember's (1971 et seq.) and Ember's (1978 et seq.) definition which stresses 'the territorial unit' as a component: "Warfare is defined as fighting between two or more territorial units (at the community level on up) as long as there is a group of fighters on at least one side". A. Johnson (1934) refers to the belligerents as 'organic entities', and Winthrop (1991) as 'politically constituted, autonomous groups'.

Other definitions emphasize the 'organized and/or sanctioned' aspects of violence: Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915), Durbin & Bowlby (1938), Malinowski (1941), Huxley (1944), Bernard (1944), Hoebel (1949), Bouthoul (1953), Mead (1968), Kennedy (1971), Claessen (1975), Roper (1975), Meyer (1977 et seq.), Divale & Harris (1976). Furthermore, primitive war is regarded as a form or category or subset of (armed) conflict (A. Johnson, 1924; Newcomb, 1950; Driver, 1961; Mead, 1968; Alland, 1973; Tefft, 1975; Seymour-Smith, 1986), armed contest
armed combat (Otterbein, 1970), struggle ('Kampf': Meyer, 1977), force or (physical) violence (Malinowski, 1941; Huber, 1975; Melko in Nettleship et al., 1975; Hunter & Whitten, 1976), assault (Hoebel, 1949), intergroup competition (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975; Durham, 1976; Riches, 1987), intergroup homicide (Divale & Harris, 1976), and as a species of the genus of fighting (Durbin & Bowlby, 1938; Ember & Ember, 1971 et seq.; Ember, 1978 et seq.).

Some scholars have included in their definitions specifications of subcategories. For example, Driver (1961) reserves the term 'war' for "conflicts between two factions with true political organization, each of which possesses definite leadership, some kind of military tactics, and at least the hope of being able to weather a series of battles". The term 'raid' is used to designate "a single small military engagement of short duration; while 'feud' is limited to "conflicts between two families, lineages, clans, sibs, or other kinship groups". Burch & Correll (1971) and Irwin (1990) define 'war' as conflict between the members of a number of extended families from two or more regional groups, and 'feuding' as hostilities limited to the members of two extended families. Otterbein (1970) states: "Armed combat, which is fighting with weapons, is performed by military organizations. When political communities within the same cultural unit engage in warfare, this is considered to be internal war. When warfare occurs between political communities which are not culturally similar, this is referred to as external war. If there is more than one military organization within a political community, and these military organizations engage in armed combat, this is considered feuding or civil war depending upon the scope of the conflict".

Some theorists explicitly exclude 'feuding' from 'war' (e.g., Mühlmann, 1940; Meyer, 1977), while others explicitly include it (e.g., Divale & Harris, 1976; who define warfare as "all organized forms of intergroup homicide involving combat teams of two or more persons, including feuding and raiding"). This theme will be explored in more detail in the following paragraphs.

A few rather atypical or idiosyncratic definitions merit some closer scrutiny. E.O. Wilson (1978) defines war as "the violent rupture of the intricate and powerful fabric of the territorial taboos observed by social groups". Such a definition is intelligible only in its own theoretical context (See Ch. 6). Mead (1968) defines the 'institution of warfare' (war is actually the more accurate term for the institution) as follows: "Warfare exists if the conflict is organized, and socially sanctioned and the killing is not regarded as murder. Warfare will be regarded as a cultural invention consequent upon group identification, the existence of shared taboos against intra-group killing and the equally culturally defined social sanctioning of killing members of the opposing group. If a people have, as part of their cultural repertoire of behavior, a set of articulated rules which distinguish intra-group killing from organized extra-group killing, they will be said to have the institution of warfare, whether it occurs frequently or infrequently in practice". Similar to
Mead's 'articulated rules' seems to be Bouthoul's (1953) concept of 'war as a contract'. Also Kennedy (1971) regards as the distinguishing criterion of war the deliberate, approved, legalized killing of people outside the socially defined boundaries. Elsewhere (Mead, 1940), she diagnoses some peaceful primitive peoples as lacking the concept of war. Thus, her criterion seems to be predominantly a psychological one.

A recent collective work, on the basis of several case studies (Bazin et al., 1982), defines the area of war as all the various confrontations which have no solution other than the verdict of arms. In this context, war has almost the status of an institution. There is a time for war, whose beginning and end are defined by mandatory procedures, including rituals. There are probable locations for war, an area where it takes place, boundaries which strictly mark off an internal area of peace (where conflicts are controlled) and an area of external relations (where 'real' war is possible). While every society defines the ordinary scope of war, as it were, a minimal condition must be present if violence is to be properly described as warfare. It must take on the appearance of "a confrontation between two declared adversaries, an open and uncertain conflict between two forces which are independent or consider themselves to be so, at least for the duration of the war". This definition excludes by implication predatory operations such as raids and armed banditry. In such cases, there is a relationship based on aggression and a seizure carried out by surprise at the expense of the victim. Short attacks for the purpose of plunder differ from war operations which involve resistance to attacks, a struggle between conflicting wills and intervals of time between the clashes. These two forms of activity may be present in the same society but they are never confused (Balandier, 1986).

The most general, yet precise and delimiting, definition of primitive war has been presented by Prosterman (1972): "A group activity, carried on by members of one community against members of another community, in which it is the primary purpose to inflict serious injury or death on multiple nonspecified members of that other community, or in which the primary purpose makes it highly likely that serious injury or death will be inflicted on multiple nonspecified members of that community in the accomplishment of that primary purpose".

This definition thus identifies war as (1) a group enterprise; (2) directed not internally, but against a second community; (3) directed not against one individual or a specific family, but against any members of the opposing community - or at least any armed, adult, male members - who 'get in the way' or offer resistance; and (4) aimed either at killing members of the other community, or at some goal that makes it likely they have to be killed in accomplishing it. This definition clearly excludes the murder of one man by another or a group attack on a specific individual or family, as in a blood feud or a revenge killing. Prosterman is trying to focus here on relatively impersonal group violence. But his definition does include situations where the aim of the
attack itself is not killing, but is such that the attackers reasonably expect to have to kill in order to achieve their object; for example, seizing land or women, or taking slaves from another group. In certain societies, the effort to take revenge on a specific individual will also generally necessitate the killing of nonspecified individuals. Prosterman’s definition, furthermore, has the advantage that it does not exclude certain forms of group fighting or lethal group violence per definitionem, i.e., those between units lacking ‘true political organization’.

2.4 The Historical Continuity of War

"By far the greater number of scholars of war treat it as something which has lasted as long as men have lived on earth. For most of them the question of what criteria to use to distinguish war from other kinds of fighting does not arise. For example, adherents of the biological approach have no need to address themselves to such a question. Within their frame of reference, all fighting is the result of an aggressive drive that man has inherited as an animal" (Lider, 1977). As will be seen, this is a rather grandiose and nonsensical contention, though, admittedly, not without a kernel of truth. Few ‘adherents of the biological approach’ have indeed questioned the nature of aggression and/or the presumed aggression-warfare linkage. Historians more concerned with description than analysis usually discuss primitive warfare (if noticed at all) as the first stage in the history of war. Even when great fundamental differences are found to exist between primitive and modern war, it is nevertheless taken for granted that the same phenomenon is being studied (Vayda, 1968). Chagnon (1968) contends that primitive war differs from the modern one only by the small scale in military operations, short duration of active hostilities, poor development of command and discipline, and some other not too significant features. Nettleship (1975) observes that the definitions of ‘the social institution of war’ by major thinkers on the subject "do not routinely treat primitive fighting as different from war" although, as he thinks, this may be a profitable differentiation. He points out the differences: Primitive societies are not sovereign states, they lack armed forces, and their fighting is of inconsiderable magnitude and especially brief duration. Moreover, in social science literature there are innumerable general comments reflecting the assumption that war, as a product of social structures, has always coexisted with man, since man as a social animal has always lived in organized societies, be they tribes, city-states, nation-states, or empires. And political realists, who disdain discussions of the origins of war, take it as an article of faith that men have in fact always pursued their goals by waging war, and that many goals could not have been achieved otherwise (e.g., Osgood & Tucker, 1967; Halle, 1973; Brodie, 1974; more nuanced: Ferrill, 1985; Dyer,
There are scholars who, cognizant of the problem, distinguish between various kinds of fighting in primitive societies. Wars are differentiated from reprisals, feuds, and punishment (Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg, 1915; Q.Wright, 1942; 1965; Schneider, 1964; Pospisil, 1971; and others (vide infra). Some scholars state more generally that fighting in primitive society was between individuals, and the causes were more personal and familistic, than in modern wars waged for national interests, and characterized by essentially impersonal involvement and lack of personal motives (Beals & Hoijer, 1965; Lesser, 1968; Service, 1968; Dyer, 1985). Q.Wright (1942; 1965) states that the view of the origin of war in history depends on the meaning of war. If by war is meant the use of firearms to promote the policy of a group (war in the technological sense), people of modern civilization have been its 'inventors'. If by war is meant the reaction to certain situations by resort to violence (war in the psychological sense), it has always been fought by animals and men. War as a legitimate instrument of group policy (the legal, political, and economic sense of war) probably originated among civilizations, while war as a social custom utilizing regulated violence in connection with intergroup conflicts (war in the sociological sense) appears to have originated with permanent societies.

Some authors contend that the differences between wars in primitive and modern societies are less important than they might seem, for they perform the same function of fulfilling social needs (e.g., attainment of political goals, acquisition of territory, the enforcement of authority, appropriation of material requirements) that (presumably) could not be satisfied without using violence. This is the main theme of Osgood (1957). Blainey (1973) contends that primitive war and civilized war seemingly have more causal similarities than differences; e.g., some anthropologists posit that primitive wars have a 'scapegoat' background, like modern wars. Beaufre (1972) writes that the struggle of two tribes or two peoples is the simplest, archaic form of war. All features of the 'more perfect' war can be found in that type of war. Coats (1966) describes primitive warfare as the first epoch in the history of war, characterized by a great variation of techniques and methods of fighting. Melko's (Comment in Nettleship et al., 1975) broad definition of war in terms of 'physical violence between groups' clearly encompasses contemporary war, primitive war, and even gang warfare. Richards (Comment, ibid) stresses the similarities between early and modern fighting: Only the decision-making process distinguishes the fighting of tribal peoples from that of nation-states. Tefft (Comment, ibid) writes that both civilized and tribal war involve armed conflict between sovereign political units no matter how small or large, structured or unstructured, decentralized or centralized; rather than stress the difference between them, he asserts, one should recognize the similarities.
2.5 Attempts to Define ‘True’ War

The view that wars did not appear until men had developed to a certain stage in their social relations is based on a more stringent definition of war. Two criteria in particular are usually regarded as vital: Fighting may be termed war if the hostilities are waged by organized forces for political goals (Lider, 1977). Malinowski’s (1941) analysis of war is perhaps the best known example of this point of view. Dividing the history of ’social fighting’ into six stages, he reserves the term war for hostilities fought in the pursuit of national policies by organized forces. The presented stages are:

(1) Fighting, private and angry, within a group belongs to the type of breach of custom and law and is the prototype of criminal behavior. (2) Fighting, collective and organized, is a juridical mechanism for the adjustment of differences between constituent groups of the same larger cultural unit. Among the lowest savages these two types are the only forms of armed contest to be found. (3) Armed raids, as a type of man-hunting sport, for purposes of head-hunting, cannibalism, human sacrifices, and the collection of other trophies. (4) Warfare as the political expression of early nationalism, that is, the tendency to make the tribe-nation and tribe-state coincide, and thus to form a primitive nation-state. (5) Military expeditions of organized pillage, slave-raiding, and collective robbery. (6) Wars between two culturally differentiated groups as an instrument of national policy. This type of fighting, with which war in the fullest sense of the word began, leads to conquest, and, through this, to the creation of full-fledged military and political states, armed for internal control, for defense and aggression. This type of state presents, as a rule, and for the first time in evolution, clear forms of administrative, political, and legal organization. The types of armed conquest, listed as (4) and (6) and these two only, have, in form, sociological foundations, and in the occurrence of constructive policy are comparable with historically defined wars. Every one of the six types here summed up presents an entirely different cultural phase in the development of organized fighting (Malinowski, 1941).

Phase (3) he does not regard as ‘cognate to warfare’, for it is devoid of any political relevance; nor can it be considered as any systematic pursuit of intertribal policy. Human man-hunting in search of anatomic trophies, the various types of armed body-snatching for cannibalism, actual or mystical, as food for men and food for gods, present a phase of human evolution which can be understood in terms of ambition, thirst for glory, and of mystical systems. In a competent analysis of warfare as a factor in human evolution, Malinowski
asserts, they must be kept apart from constructive or organized systems of warfare. The economic motive is conspicuously absent from the earliest types of fighting. Under conditions where portable wealth does not exist; where food is too perishable and too clumsy to be accumulated and transported; where slavery is of no value because every individual consumes exactly as much as he produces - force is a useless implement for the transfer of wealth. When material booty, human labor, and condensed wealth become fully available, predatory raids acquire a meaning and make their appearance.

In the course of his analysis, Malinowski makes the following significant observation: "Everywhere, at all levels of development, and in all types of culture, we find that the direct effects of aggressiveness are eliminated by the transformation of pugnacity into collective hatreds, tribal or national policies, which lead to organized, ordered fighting, but prevent any physiological reactions of anger. Human beings never fight on an extensive scale under the direct influence of an aggressive impulse. They fight and organize for fighting because, through tribal tradition, through teachings of a religious system, or of an aggressive patriotism, they have been indoctrinated with certain cultural values which they are prepared to defend, and with certain collective hatreds on which they are ready to assault and kill".

Turney-High (1949) introduced the concept of 'Military Horizon' beyond which 'true' war exists. The military horizon is one of social organization and has next to nothing to do with the state of weapons: "The military horizon depends, then, not upon the adequacy of weapons but the adequacy of team work, organization, and command working along certain simple principles. Some groups failed to achieve this and, despite their face-painting and sporadic butchery, were not soldiers". He contends that the invention of tactics is the threshold that divides true war from submilitary combat. The following conditions are necessary for true war: (1) Tactical operations; (2) Definite command and control: Without definite military authority in control throughout the action, there exists only a bloody brawl; (3) Ability to conduct a campaign for the reduction of enemy resistance if the first battle fails: This is a much higher condition than that of the mere raid, and implies more self-discipline and social organization; (4) The motive must have some clarity: The war must have a group motive rather than an individual one, or even one based on kinship. True war is above the plane of feuds; it is a political device; (5) An adequate supply (such logistic ability to provide surplus food for armies in the field, is so important that Turney-High is tempted to place it in the center of the whole military complex). Very few nonliterate tribes, Turney-High holds, have been able to meet these conditions, and thus were unable to cross the military horizon (See also Meyer, 1990).

The same theme was picked up by Hoebel (1949), who regards war as a complex institution that involves definite purpose and organized sustained assault. According to him, true war has four necessary conditions: (1) A group
motive; (2) Leadership; (3) Tactical operations; and (4) Ability to sustain a series of assaults until the aim of the war is attained. Such concepts as the 'military horizon’ as a crucial criterion for distinguishing war from other types of fighting, has been criticized as presenting a highly ethnocentric, or maybe more aptly 'moderncentric’ perspective (Tefft, 1975; Kimball, 1974).

2.6 Types of Primitive Warfare

According to Mead (1963), human primitive warfare can be separated into different strands. In one kind of warfare the emphasis is on destruction - killing - for its own sake. In various ways, head hunting, cannibalism, blood feud, and war games for the attainment of honors exemplify warfare of this kind. In contrast, there is the kind of warfare which is primarily protective of the life of the group. In both kinds of warfare the end results may be much the same, though. Men, killing in behalf of their women and children, may be caught up in the lust of battle.

Benedict (1959) makes the distinction between 'socially lethal’ and 'non-lethal’ wars. In the latter, the aim is not subjugating other tribes to the victors; e.g., although there was much warfare among North American Indians, "The idea of conquest never arose in aboriginal North America, and this made it possible for almost all these Indian tribes to do a very extreme thing: to separate war from the state". But it was not, in fact, such an extreme thing as Benedict claims; it was, rather, a normal state of affairs in primitive peoples, for whom warfare as a practical instrument for achieving political aims was a relatively rare phenomenon (See Ch. 5).

A distinction somewhat corresponding to Benedict’s has been proposed by Speier (1941). He distinguished three types of warfare according to the main objectives of the belligerents and, related to this primary aim, the perception of the enemy or the opponent:

(a) Genocidal or absolute war: Primary objective is the utter elimination, devastation or destruction of the enemy. The enemy is perceived as vermin or the incorporation of evil, to be exterminated by all means.

(b) Instrumental war: Main objective is the acquisition of territory, property, commodities, etc. belonging to the opponent, or some other purpose for which war may be instrumental. The enemy is perceived as an obstacle blocking the way to the primary goal. The enemy is to be overcome, not necessarily to be eliminated.

(c) Agonistic war: Honor and glory of the individual warrior by means of brave and valorous exploits is the primary objective. The whole enterprise is highly ritualized. The opponent is perceived as a worthy antagonist, equally eager to establish his fame on the battlefield: "[T]he fight is waged under conditions of
studied equality and under strict observance of rules. Measured in terms of
destruction such a fight is highly inefficient and ludicrously ceremonious.
However, the agonistic fight... is not oriented toward the destruction of the
enemy. Nor is it directed toward the acquisition of wealth or other useful ends.
It is fought for a prize, i.e., for a symbolic value attached to victory (glory)."
I will call these categories, for no other reason than the alliteration, Wars of
Carnage, Wars of Coercion, and Wars of Calisthenics, respectively.

Probably the best-known distinction among types of primitive war is
Q.Wright’s (1942; 1965) motivational (and hypothetically reflecting levels of
cultural-evolutionary advancement) categorization of defensive, social,
economic, and political warfare (See § 2.11.0.1).
Based on different concepts of power, Meyer (1981 et seq.) makes the very
important and illuminating distinction between two patterns of primitive war:
The endemic war pattern, based on non-materialistic and metaphysical
concepts of power and notions of resources, and the instrumental war
pattern, based on materialistic concepts of power and resources. This distinction
roughly coincides with Q.Wright’s distinction, mentioned above, in social
versus economic/political war.

A distinction of paramount importance regarding (the explanation of) primitive
warfare is the distinction between intracultural, intraregional, or intratribal
warfare (also called internal-structural), and intercultural, interregional, or
intertribal warfare (also called external or ethnocentric). As Steager (1975)
explains: "Once the militaristic tradition is established in a primitive
community, there are two patterns: ethnocentric (e.g. Cheyenne) and internal-
structural (e.g. Yanomamö). In the first mode, people fight only outsiders, and
are often internally very harmonious. Foreigners are considered intrinsically
inferior. In the second mode, people fight only their relatives, never foreigners.
Warfare in the second mode is less extreme and genocidal than in the first, but
more frequent - nearly continuous. When internal cleavages are so deep, people
cannot unite even against an invader, so often fall prey to colonialism".
Such a distinction between internal and external war was originally proposed
by Otterbein (1968, 1970, 1973). Internal war is "warfare between political
communities within the same cultural unit". External war is "warfare between
culturally different political communities, i.e. political communities which are
not members of the same cultural unit". The concept of cultural unit is derived
from Malinowski (1941): "A cultural unit is composed of contiguous political
communities that are culturally similar".
Ember & Ember (1971 et seq.) make a similar distinction between internal and
external war. Strate (1985) defines internal warfare as "armed combat by a
political system against the property, population, or territory of another
political system of the same society". And external offensive warfare as "armed
combat by a political system against the property, population, or territory of a
political system of a different society”.

Two basic, and related, types of conflict are also identified by Ferguson (1984): (1) Conflict between similarly situated groups over control of a particularly important, but restricted, resource; and (2) conflict between groups in different ecological zones over access to more productive areas. The latter often takes the form of war between inland and coastal peoples.

The majority of cases of tribal warfare is of the internal or intracultural type. The following are some examples of recently studied tribal peoples: Yanomamö (Chagnon, 1967 et seq.), Mae Enga (Meggitt, 1977), Tausug (Kiefer, 1968), Jalé (Koch, 1974), Kogu (Berndt, 1962), Fore (Lindenbaum, 1979), Kapauku (Pospisil, 1964), and Tonga (Colson, 1971).

LeVine (1961) proposed the following structural conflict levels as applicable to virtually all societies: (a) Intrafamily; (b) intracommunity; (c) intercommunity; and (4) intercultural or intertribal. The nature of conflict and the responses to it vary according to the social relationships between the opponents. At each of the social levels - family and kinship groups, villages, groups of villages, and beyond - the rules of fighting and settling fights change. This principle is neatly illustrated by a group of Nigerian Ibo villages called Afikpo (Ottenberg, 1971; 1978). Murder within a clan does not require punishment, since it is regarded as a misfortune. Instead the group must be purified by mandatory ritual steps. In the case of murder outside the clan but within the Afikpo group, the murderer or a member of his clan must die and the matter is thereby closed. The nature of conflict among Afikpo groups is illustrated by disputes over their palm groves from which are derived valuable palm oil and much-desired wine. When it is time to harvest the fruit, members of two villages may quarrel over who owns the grove. They scream and wave their machetes at each other but seldom hurt anybody seriously; their objective is to scare the other group away. The rules for this mock warfare are strict: Participants are allowed to hit with the flat of the blade and even nick an opponent but killing is forbidden and necessitates revenge. Warfare between Afikpo and the four neighboring, related Ibo groups is another type of conflict. Disputes over border farmland can cause killings and retaliatory killings, small-scale fighting back and forth which can continue for years. But sooner or later one of the other related groups invariably suggests mediation. Finally, the Afikpo conduct warfare against the unrelated peoples who live across the Cross River, speak a different language, and are described as poisoners by the Afikpo. There is considerable raiding, much of it for pure excitement. Genuine wars have, however, been fought for control of movement and fishing on the river. This fighting is intermittent, long-term, and unresolved because the opponents see themselves as total strangers and no mechanism for mediation exists.
2.7 Lex Talionis: Feuding and/or versus Warfare

Should a blood feud be considered to be war, or is it a different phenomenon altogether? And if the latter, are these manifestations of collective violence related to each other, for instance in the sense that they have some common psychological roots, or that a blood feud can escalate into full-fledged war? And, if so, can there be drawn a meaningful boundary between them? Theorists have engaged in acrimonious polemics to make their respective points. Implied in the following concepts and definitions of feud and feuding are the rather confusing notions of feud as a form of primitive law and as a breakdown of the system of law; and as a form of warfare, and as a phenomenon quite distinct from warfare. These contradictory notions will be the subject of the next paragraphs.

2.7.1 The Concept of Feud

The term 'feud' is etymologically derived from Old High German fehida, meaning enmity (Winthrop, 1991). Feud has been defined by Lasswell (1931) as "relations of mutual animosity among intimate groups in which a resort to violence is anticipated on both sides", and by Evans-Pritchard (1940) as "lengthy mutual hostility between local communities within a tribe". A feud thus involves prolonged and intermittent hostilities. As a logical consequence, a single fight or a single killing do not qualify as a feud. Lasswell states that feuds often continue so long after they begin that the precipitating episodes are even forgotten. Long intervals of relative peace sometimes elapse between the fights and slayings (Lowie, 1920).

"Feuds are a kind of war where the antagonists belong to a tribe rather than to a territory" Bataille (1962) states rather enigmatically. According to Otterbein (1968; 1970) and Tefft (1975), blood revenge within the same political community constitutes 'feuding', while armed conflict between such political communities is war. Other conceptions of feuding stipulate that the 'local communities within a tribe' are kinship groups. For example, Hammond (1971) and Leavitt (1977) define 'feuding' as "armed combat and/or violent physical contact between two or more kinship groups".

"Feud is a state of conflict between two kinship groups within a society, manifest by a series of unprivileged killings and counterkillings between the kinship groups, usually initiated in response to an original homicide or other grievous injury" (Hoebel, 1972). Hoebel goes on to observe that legal historians traditionally have seen primitive society as marked by a horrid and constant state of feud, rent by violent retaliation and blood revenge, and, in
general, an arena of violence ruled by the law of the jungle and the *lex talionis* (the iron law of an-eye-for-an-eye).

On the other hand, according to Black-Michaud (1976) "feud may be regarded as a form of communicative behaviour uniting parts of society in alliance and locking opposite groups in hostile competition over shared values which are exchanged and intensified through such interaction". Leach (1977) complements such a notion by stating: "Within any small intimate circle of individuals who live and work together all the time... even the quarrels are conducted according to rules: there is, in effect, agreement about how to disagree. This also is what happens in feud-type warfare".

Pospisil (1971) makes a distinction between 'feud' and another mechanism which he calls 'self-redress': "Instances of violence involving injury, revenge and counterrevenge within the political unit constitute feud. When only part of the political community, such as a family or lineage directs violence against outsiders, this is external self-redress. Feud occurs within political communities whose leadership is too weak or disinterested to control its constituents. External self-redress occurs under similar circumstances (See Fig. 2.7.3).

The characteristics of violence that form one of the two major criteria of feud have been summed up by Pospisil (1971) as follows: (1) The violence of a feud ranges in intensity from injury to killing; (2) it is initiated on behalf of a particular individual or family that is a member of the more inclusive 'injured group'; and (3) it is of long duration, involving at least three instances of violence - injury, revenge, and counterrevenge. Hostile acts consisting of an injury and of an equivalent revenge that is accepted as final by both parties do not merit the term feud and should more properly be called self-redress. The nature of self-redress is, in most cases, basically different from the prolonged violence called feud.

Bohannan (1963) similarly states that "feud occurs when the principle of self-help gets out of hand", implying that if an injury is redressed through violence and the self-redress is final and more or less accepted by the other party, such violence does not merit the term 'feud' (Pospisil, 1971).

The second major criterion of feud, which requires the committed violence to occur between 'intimate (or related) groups', is far more complex. It is almost generally agreed that the two groups fighting each other must be related in order to qualify such hostilities as a feud. However, various authors differ in their explanation of the nature of this relationship. For example, for Q.Wright (1942; 1965) it is the family. For Malinowski (1941) it is groups belonging to 'the same larger cultural unit'. Similarly, those who use the phrase 'members of the same society' or 'local community' do not necessarily identify the political unit involved. For example, Gluckman (1940) speaks of a type of intertribal feud within a larger nation, while Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) restrict the relationship of feuding groups to membership in the same tribe:
"Feuds would thus also be the appropriate name for reprisals exercised by one branch of a community upon another, e.g., as between two clans or two local groups within a tribe".

Evans-Pritchard (1940) contrasts the hostilities of the feud with the intertribally organized violence which he calls war: "Thus, if a man of one tribe kills a man of another tribe, retribution can only take the form of intertribal warfare... Between segments of the same tribe, opposition is expressed by the institution of the feud".

Some authors theorize that marriage ties constitute the link between the two feuding groups. Accordingly, hostilities in a society with exogamous subgroups such as clans, lineages, or local communities are all regarded as feuds and not as wars (Schneider, 1964; also implied by Colson, 1962).

Evans-Pritchard (1940) agrees with the criterion of prolonged violence (a chain or cycle of killings, retaliatory counter-killings, counter-counter-killings, etc.). However, he points out that a feud cannot go on indefinitely; otherwise the relationship of the fighting groups would be severed, and further hostilities, not occurring between related groups, could no longer by implication called feud. Pospisil (1971) concludes that feud involves prolonged, often intermittent violence which must end at some point short of the obliteration of the second criterion of feud - the intimate relationship of the feuding groups. Of course, concluding a feud does not necessarily mean that mutual hostility is transformed into indifference or friendship. A new feuding cycle most likely erupts between the old combatants any time that a new crime or injury is committed by an individual against a member of the other side.

Another common characteristic of the violence that may be classified as feud is that the actual acts of hostility are regulated by customs shared by the two fighting groups (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952). In other words, the hostilities of the two groups are patterned upon, and subject to, rules which both sides observe. Furthermore, the initial act of violence is regarded as injury to the whole group to which the victim belongs (family, clan, or village), and the members consequently stand under an obligation to avenge the injustice (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952; Nadel, 1947). Paraphrasing Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown calls their duty an expression of 'collective solidarity'. However, this principle works also with regard to the opposite party, where it produces a group liability, with the effect that any member of the offender's group may be slain for the crime of his relative, his friend, or a coresident.

According to Radcliffe-Brown (1940; 1952), another aspect of the violence of feuds is that it is justified by 'public sentiment'. Unfortunately, he fails to specify whether this public sentiment pertains to the group of avengers, to both of the groups in conflict, or to the society at large (Pospisil, 1971). Not all acts of violence justify development of such a sentiment: In order that a violent revenge be considered a justifiable act, its magnitude should be valued
as an equivalent of the injury suffered (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952; Nadel, 1947). Among the Nuba, for example, 'equivalence' is so specific that not only must a man be killed for a man and a woman for a woman, but the age of the person killed in revenge should approximate that of the original victim. For death in excess of requirement a compensation must be offered in the form of a person who is adopted into the offended clan (Nadel, 1947). In most other primitive societies such compensation is usually rendered in payment known in the literature as 'blood money'.

### 2.7.2 Feud as a Juridical Mechanism

In stateless systems, disputes cannot be referred to an impartial government backed by a police force. The characteristic pattern of responding to criminal or civil wrongs is 'self-help' or self-redress: The individual or group which feels injured considers himself or itself legitimately responsible for punishing a crime or penalizing a tort. Self-help in these circumstances involves two stages which appear to be directly comparable to the functions of adjudication and enforcement in modern legal systems (Masters, 1964).

As Barton (1930) noted in his study of Philippine headhunters, the self-enforcement of legal penalties raises a crucial problem. The kinship group which enforces the *lex talionis* by killing a murderer or one of his kin sees this act as not only necessary, but also legitimate. Although unrelated bystanders may accept this interpretation, since retaliatory killing is customary, the kinship group which is penalized may not consider the retaliation to be a legitimate punishment, and, in its turn, resort to self-help.

Middleton & Tait (1958) argue that within a local community or family unit, disputes culminating in violence are generally not self-perpetuating; a punishment or penalty 'atones' for a crime and thereby completes the legal case. The more or less permanent condition of feuding is rendered unlikely, if not impossible, by the existence of close kinship ties and relationships of 'administrative organization'.

Outside of this range of 'nuclear groups', punishment does not terminate the rivalry arising out of a dispute; although retaliatory violence tends to be self-perpetuating. Middleton & Tait suggest that there is a zone in which the opposed groups recognize an obligation to settle their dispute. In this range of social interaction there are normally procedures for arriving at a settlement. Hence, among the Nuer, the 'leopard-skin chief' holds an office which serves the function of settling feuds on the basis of compensation (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). The 'go-between' among the Ifugao serves a similar function (Barton, 1930).

Middleton & Tait use the term 'jural community' to describe the unit within which disputes take the form of feuds to be settled by an established procedure. "The jural community... is the widest grouping within which there are a moral
obligation and a means ultimately to settle disputes peaceably".
The fact that feuds are fought between subgroups of a more inclusive grouping possessing an overall network of political relations has led to the conclusion that feud is a primitive juridical mechanism and that it is an expression, or manifestation of primitive law (Pospisil, 1971).

Tylor (1881) was one of the first to explain the ‘Rule of Vengeance’ or Lex Talionis as an instrument of primitive law. Accordingly, Malinowski (1941) writes: "Fighting, collective and organized, is a juridical mechanism for the adjustment of differences between constituent groups of the same larger cultural unit". Spencer (1959) contends that after a north Alaskan Eskimo was killed, "his own kin became embroiled and the legal mechanism of the feud was put into motion". The notion that feuding is a manifestation of primitive law led Lasswell (1931) to the conclusion that there must be two types of feuds: "While the blood vengeance feud was itself the expression of primitive law, the modern feud is at least formally illegal and characteristically fills the interstices left in the functioning of the prevailing system of legal organization".

2.7.3 Feud as Outlaw Behavior

Many anthropologists have disagreed with the idea that feud is the expression of primitive law. Hoebel (1949), for example, considers feud to lie outside the sphere of law, because (a) the counterkillings do not stop and (b) there is nothing one may regard as a mutually recognized coercive sanction against the killer and his group. Similarly, Bohannan (1963) calls feud "a faulty jural mechanism" because it does not lead to a final settlement - to peace and rectitude. Radcliffe-Brown (1940) refuses to regard feud as a juridical mechanism because it lacks "the exercise of recognized authority in settling disputes".

Pospisil (1971) defined law by means of four criteria (relation to group, relation to authority, degree of participation, and duration), none of which, he said, is inherent in the phenomena of feuds. He considered feud to be prolonged, unauthorized, intergroup violence. Consequently, feud is an internal affair, conducted, however, by members of the subgroups of an overall political organization who ignore or even defy its political authority; it refers to intergroup phenomena. Law, on the contrary, is an intragroup affair in the full sense of the term: A decision of the authority who holds jurisdiction over both parties to the dispute is passed, and both disputing parties are induced or forced to comply with its provisions. The relationships between the various types of intra- and intergroup violence are shown in Fig. 2.7.3.
2.7.4 Primitive Warfare as an Extended Feud

The concept of primitive warfare as an extended feud has been formulated as early as 1881 by Tylor. He wrote: "The relation of primitive vengeance to public war is well seen among rude tribes, such as inhabit the forests of Brazil. When a murder is done within the tribe, then of course vengeance lies between the two families concerned; but if the murderer is of another clan or tribe, then it becomes a public wrong. The injured community hold council, and mostly decide for war if they dare; then a war-party sets forth, in which the near kinsmen of the murdered man, their bodies painted with black daubs to show their deadly office, rush foremost into the fight.

Among neighbouring tribes the ordinary way in which war begins is by some quarrel or trespass, then a man is killed on one side or the other, and the vengeance for his death spread into blood-feud and tribal war ever ready to break out from generation to generation. This barbaric state of things lasted far on into the history of Europe" (Tylor, 1881)

Among contemporary writers, Mühmann (1940 et seq.) defends the thesis that primitive warfare probably developed out of the blood feud (Cf. also Meyer, 1977 et seq.). Conceptually, Mühmann (1940) is also weary to make a distinction between feud and war. Rather, he regards the blood feud as a special type of war\(^1\). Similarly, if warfare is defined as intergroup competition

\(^1\) "Einige Schriftsteller möchten die Bluträchefehden nicht mit zum Kriege rechnen. Wir glauben, daß sich ihre Abtrennung vom Kriege nicht durchführen läßt, es gibt zu viele sachliche und psychologische Zusammenhänge. Die Blutfehde ist ein besonderer Typus des Krieges; sie ist ein Krieg mit mangelhaft präzisiertem Ziel: das Ziel ist die bloße Vergeltung" (Mühmann, 1940).
with intent to kill, if necessary, on both sides, Bigelow (1975) asserts, then even blood feuds are a form of warfare. The slippery line between warfare and personal retribution among hunters and gatherers is well illustrated in the example of armed conflict among the Tiwi of Bathurst and Melville Islands, Northern Australia. As recounted by Hart & Pilling (1960), a number of men from the Tiklauila and Rangwila bands developed personal grievances against a number of men who were residing with the Mandiimbula band. The aggrieved individuals, together with their relatives, put on the white paint of war, armed themselves, and set off, some thirty strong, to do battle with the Mandiimbula. The two armies lined up at opposite sides of the battlefield. Hostilities were begun by elders shouting insults and accusations at particular individuals in the 'enemy' ranks. Although some of the old men urged that a general attack be launched, their grievances turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one or at most two or three individuals. "Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals for reasons based on individual disputes". As soon as somebody was wounded, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides.

2.7.5 Feuding and Warfare: Distinct or Overlapping Categories?

In his study of primitive war, Q.Wright (1942; 1965) observed that 'reprisals' and 'war' can, in theory, be distinguished. "They are, however, closely related, and it seems advisable to include all external, group-sanctioned violence against other human beings in the conception of primitive war" (Q.Wright, 1942). The use of the concept of legality misses the mark in defining what war is, Kimball (1974) states. It would be more appropriate to say that war and feud are neither legal nor illegal in the proper sense of the term, but that both are resorts to organized, collective violence in the absence of law or in the event of the breakdown of peaceful procedures of resolving group conflict and achieving group ends. Whether belligerents observe or break certain laws in resorting to or in conducting armed, organized, lethal violence does not change the fact that they are resorting to and conducting war.

A more workable approach to a classification, Kimball suggests, would be to include under the heading of war all methodic, armed, and lethal violence between organized groups, making allowances for historical epoch and tradition, geographical area, social unit, and cultural stage.

On the other hand, Masters (1964) holds that "a condition of feud should not be equated too completely with what we call 'war'; rather, it is a condition of rivalry in which intermittent violence (e.g., seizure of property as well as retaliatory killing) appears legitimate to those who attack, and illegitimate to
the victims”. Similarly, Middleton & Tait (1958) suggest that primitive feuds and wars can be distinguished because only in the latter is there no obligation to attempt to settle the dispute (Cf. Barton, 1915; Radcliffe-Brown, 1940).

Among many primitive peoples a distinction is made between those groups with whom violence is limited to feuding and those with whom there is a continuous condition of war. A given group is not bound by common procedures of dispute settlement with foreigners or with individuals from different parts (or ‘jural communities’) of the same nation. For example, whereas conflicting groups from the same Nuer tribe could only be in a state of feud, individuals or groups from different Nuer tribes are always in a potential state of war with each other. When spatially or culturally distant groups are involved, violence is likely to emerge at any time, even in the absence of a formal dispute (Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Morgan, 1851).

Among many primitive peoples, therefore, social distance (which is highly correlated with geographical distance) decreases the likelihood that violence, should it occur, will be limited. For many other primitive societies the group or ‘political community’ to which allegiance is owed varies, depending on the dispute in question (Masters, 1964; Cf. Mair, 1962).

Schneider (1950; 1952), in particular, opposes those ethnologists, who, unlike Malinowski (1941; see § 2.5), classified all forms of group-sanctioned violence under the heading of primitive war. Feud, he concludes, "is a matter of crime and punishment within populations where systems of public justice are undeveloped. That is not war". To make the term ‘war’ cross-culturally applicable and meaningful, Pospisil (1971) admonishes, it should be defined in terms of political-structural features.

2.7.6 Feuding and Warfare: Harsh Reality Strikes Back

In their groundbreaking correlational study, Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) defined war as "an operation conducted in the name of the community as a whole" against another community, usually organized by a leader who is followed by a group of volunteers. Feuds, on the other hand, were "reprisals exercised by one branch of a community upon another, e.g. as between two clans or two local groups within a tribe" conducted by kinsfolk or a body of friends. But the authors’ examination of some 650 contemporary ‘simpler peoples’ arranged in three grades of agriculture, two of pastoralism, and two of hunting-gathering, failed to uncover evidence adequate for making the distinction between wars and feuds.

The only workable categories they could devise for statistical correlations were ‘war and feuding’ on the one hand and ‘no war’ on the other. Under these categories, they found 298 cases of war or feuds and nine certain and four doubtful cases of ‘no war’. Wars and feuds were distributed through all the
grades, but cases of 'no war' were confined primarily to hunting-gathering and
lowest agriculture, the 'lowest' grades of all.
Their conclusion was that "as distinguished from a feud, war implies a certain
development of social organisation, and is probably not so common at the
lowest stages as it becomes higher up". But even at the lower stages of social
organization, feuds are apt to take on a more or less organized form and are
very difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish from wars. While they denied
the validity of the view that war was the normal condition of primitive
societies, they also argued that the absence of war or feuds among some groups
did not indicate that there was "an association of peaceful propensities with the
lowest stage of culture as such. At most it may be said that organised war
develops with the advance of industry and of social organisation in general".

Hobhouse (1956) subsequently reaffirmed and expanded upon this analysis in a
comparative study of peace and order among 14 primitive populations which
were often mentioned by ethnologists as representatives of the 'simplest' of
peoples. They possessed only rudimentary technology and lived as 'close to
nature' as any people known. Their basic social unit was the semi-permanent
'little group' of roughly 30 to 80 closely-related individuals, who intermarried,
had friendly relations, and shared a common culture with the members of
similar groups in a fairly well-defined district. The aggregate of such groups he
called a tribe, which comprised a few hundred individuals and lacked political
union or government. Tribal groups usually roamed over common ground, and
with men hunting and women gathering, each group obtained food
cooperatively and shared it with all present.
There were few distinctions of rank or wealth and little inequality between
sexes. With the eldest male generally exercising some, but insecure and
undefined, leadership, each group possessed very slight 'governmental'
organization.
Collective fighting and bloodletting did occasionally occur within the tribe,
beyond the tribe, and in one case, within the group. Excluding 2 of the 14
tribes on the grounds of inadequate evidence, Hobhouse found 'fighting
between groups' in 5 cases, 'concerted vengeance of families' in 2, and 'no
collective fighting within the tribe' in 5. But of the latter, at least one tribe
fought aliens. Of the remaining 4 tribes in this category "one... killed strange
trespassers in recent times; one... had a tradition of group fighting; the
remaining two admit private vengeance".

Hobhouse was well aware of the argument that in many of these cases
intergroup fighting should be called 'feuding' (concerted vengeance) or
'assassination' (personal reprisal) instead of 'war'. "We may agree that it is
something less than war" he replied, "but it is also materially less than peace.
Group fighting, in fact, is barely differentiated from personal and family
vengeance. The common root is the resort to violence, which unites them in
opposition to law and peace".

Group opinion in support of group and tribal custom, he maintained, was the basis of social life in the absence of government. When opinion failed to check or redress a wrong, usually personal injury and trespassing, self-help with the aid of friends was the only resort. Violence in this case was not necessarily the legal method of redress, but the only method in an undeveloped polity. The force of group opinion was most effective within the group, but less so in relation to other groups or aliens. In proportion to the degree the group supported its injured members, occasional personal reprisal could develop into concerted reprisal between individuals and their supporters, and, finally, into intergroup fighting.

Hobhouse believed his study at least indicated that to wage bloody collective fighting, a people need not possess a complicated array of weaponry. And to those analysts who held that war was an organized operation of campaigns and pitched battles, he answered that "it would be meaningless to deny it of these peoples in their primitive condition, because they have no such organisation". To those who argued that verifiable war only took place against aliens or because of alien influence, such as civilization, he cautioned that to make "the inference that in a world of primitives all would be peace is unwarranted".

Comparatively, collective primitive fighting involves smaller and less organized groups and fewer and less complex armaments than civilized war. It is less methodical and less political, and it usually results in less killing. In fact, words like 'organized', 'methodical', and 'political', have little, or more accurately, different meaning when applied to primitive conditions. It is, therefore, somewhat inconsistent, anachronistic, and ethnocentric for scholars like Sumner (1911), Malinowski (1936; 1941), Turney-High (1949), Schneider (1950; 1952; 1959), and others, who claim the advantages of comparative, evolutionary, and functional methods to the study of war, to insist on conceptual criteria developed in the observance of civilized warfare. While it is correct to insist that war at least means armed and bloody struggle between organized groups, allowances must be made, as Bouthoul (1959) cautioned, for the nuances of interpretation in order to account for the waging of war in different places during different epochs, and one might add, by different cultures (Kimball, 1974).

Furthermore, because the motives for going to war and the functions served by war have varied with time, place, and culture, it is of little use to emphasize any one motivational or functional criterion (Kimball, 1974; Cf. Harris, 1972; Lesser, 1968; Goldschmidt, 1966; Meyer, 1990).

War, Kimball (1974) concludes his diatribe, is a collective activity performed by a fighting group in the name of a social group against another group for whatever rational, irrational, ritualistic, legitimate, or illegitimate purpose, for whatever intended or unintended result, and often despite the variety of individual motives found among the fighting group’s members and the social
group’s members, some of whom may not even support the war effort.

Hoebel (1972) submits that there is very limited evidence for the actual occurrence of feuding in primitive societies. Legal procedures or ritual devices such as regulated combat as a means of avoiding or terminating feud have been universally found to exist in such cultures. The idea that feud is called for is widespread among primitive peoples, but they actually seem to prefer to accept damages rather than take blood revenge. An example would be the case of the Trobriand Islanders for whom Malinowski (1935) reported that although honor makes ‘vendetta’ obligatory in cases of homicide, it was evaded by the substitution of blood money (compensation). There was much Trobriand talk of feud, but Malinowski could not find one specific case. In all anthropological reports, Hoebel (1972) asserts, this is the rule rather than the exception.

Real feud is socially destructive and dangerous. When it does occur, it does represent a breakdown of peaceful resolution of conflict. As Drucker (1967) has written of the Northwest Coast Indians of North America: "[T]he threat of violence was always present if the claims of the aggrieved were disregarded... Settlement of these conflicts were usually reached, but never easily... And at times negotiations did break down and were followed by a period of bloody feuding".

In spite of the hostile relations between feuding communities, the possibility of contact is virtually never completely cut off. For example, Kiefer (1972) says of the Tausug of the Philippines: "The ties between two feuding communities are never totally severed; there will always be persons who are able to freely travel between them, bringing gossip and information and perhaps arranging for settlement. Women, children, and the elderly are always de facto neutrals; it is considered very shameful to kill them, although sometimes they are hit by accident. Women are sometimes even sent to gather information about the enemy, usually on a ruse of visiting distant kin".

Furthermore, cross-cutting kinship ties tend to attenuate all-out violence. For example, when the Kogu of New Guinea plan a raid or a fight, then "it is necessary to take into account the presence of women with brothers and other kin among the 'enemy'" (Berndt, 1962). In the highly ritualized battles of the Kapauku of West New Guinea, relatives position themselves so as not to face and fight each other (Pospisil, 1964).

Moreover, the violence is often regulated by means of reciprocating or balancing of retaliatory actions. "Killing should have its limits" as the Kogu say (Berndt, 1962). And Lindenbaum (1979) writes of the Fore inhabiting the same region: "If you want to avenge a death’, the young men are told, ‘kill just one man or shoot one of his pigs. If you can’t find a pig, his dog will do. They are, after all, the children of men. You may even take something very good from his garden and eat it, but stop at that’" (See further Ch. 7).
2.8 Interlude: Discussion and Proposal

The problem of the definition of ‘war’, including ‘primitive war’, is not merely a topic of sterile academic debate or trivial casuistry. On the contrary, it is of paramount importance within a general theoretical framework concerning the problem whether war existed at the dawn of mankind’s evolution - as is the one popular doctrine - or whether war is - as is the other popular doctrine - a rather recent cultural invention, a concomitant of the rise of civilization.

The validity of any tentative answer to this problem may be questioned, or even denounced, on the ground of insufficient definitional delineation of the concept of war. Is there, for instance, any rationale for classifying a Bushman cattle-raiding expedition as warfare; or a Plains Indian horse-stealing party; or a Dayak head-hunting party; or, for that matter, a New Guinea pitched battle resulting in a single casualty?

Definitions of ‘war’ can be either dichotomous or polychotomous. The dichotomous definitions distinguish wars from non-wars; polychotomous definitions conceive of a series of events from most to least warlike. The former definition runs the risk of oversimplification, while the latter is more realistic but more complex. It provides for the distribution of violent events on a scale according to a number of characteristics, i.e., magnitude or size of violence (number of belligerents, number of casualties, etc.), duration, pervasiveness, organization, geography (locus, extent), power, participants, evaluation (moral, functional, utilitarian), and metamorphosis (many wars pass through specific stages). Violent events which exhibit these characteristics to a high degree are generally considered wars (Farrar, 1978).

Yet, in this multidimensional conception of war there is virtually no criterion to distinguish warfare proper from a multitude of other violent events, nor is there any indication of a borderline distinguishing these two subsets of violent events. At what moment, for instance, does a local brawl, or mass-violence, escalate into what may properly be called war? Do not polychotomous definitions, in fact, entail some implicit, unarticulated notion of the very same dichotomy they attempt to avoid, i.e., some preconceived notion of what distinguishes wars from non-wars?

Let us for a moment reconsider the restrictive elements in the definition of war. First, if war is explicitly defined as a business of states, then, evidently, war did not exist in pre-state societies. But this is considered to be a semantic subterfuge and a ‘moderncentric’ sophism. Similarly, the requirement that wars can only be waged between or among politically organized entities (be they states or some equivalent thereof) introduces a ‘Western-centered’ bias. Interdemic, intertribal, intercommunity, intergroup fighting in pre-state
societies did actually occur, and whether we call it 'war', or 'proto-war', or 'pseudo-war', or 'micro-war' or something else again, is rather immaterial. Theoretically, a clear distinction between all forms of intragroup and intergroup violence, especially between 'feuding' and 'warfare', would be preferable (and, perhaps, the only psychologically real distinction is who is considered to be 'the enemy'). For all practical purposes, however, stubborn reality defies our abstract scheming and borderlines appear to be fluid, nebulous, if they can be drawn at all.

Secondly, a numerical criterion of so-and-so many direct battle casualties in the definition of war is (a) totally arbitrary even regarding modern warfare; and (b) absolutely not applicable to primitive peoples or band-level societies. This criterion may thus be rejected.

Mead (1968) argued that war requires an organization for killing, willingness to die on the part of its members, social approval within the societies concerned, and agreement that it is a legitimate - not necessarily desirable - way of solving problems.

The 'self-sacrifice' and the 'legitimacy' components of this definition cannot, in most cases, be easily ascertained, for obvious reasons. Yet, the two other requirements may be maintained as necessary *differentia specifica* in the definition: An organization for killing, however informal; and the social approval or sanction of (at least part) of the communities concerned.

A minimum definition of war, comprising 'primitive war', should, thus, contain the following constituents: (1) The sanctioned (or legalized) use of violence or mandatory resort to violence, (2) by at least some members of a community (some minimum number of participants is required, mostly a small fighting group of warriors, or a standing army of soldiers), (3) organized for that purpose, however informally and temporarily (as in a Plains Indian raiding band), (4) against multiple, unspecified members of another community (or recognizably separate social entities: Ethnic groups, tribes, states), (5) aimed either at killing or inflicting serious injury on, or otherwise incapacitating, members of the other community, or aimed at some goal, or conducted for some purpose, that makes it likely that they have to be killed or incapacitated in accomplishing it. That is, in war - as contrasted with a feud - violence is relatively 'promiscuous': Anyone of the opposing community may be defined as an 'enemy' and thus be a potential victim. In a feud, the concept of the enemy - and potential victim - is more restricted and selective: A particular member or members of a particular kinship group, family or clan.

'Intergroup aggression', though not a preferable term as it suggests 'aggression' to be the main motive for warfare (or that it is a species of the genus of 'aggressive behaviors'), is generally used in the literature as a synonym, as are 'armed group fighting', 'lethal group violence', 'group antagonism' and 'armed conflict'.

Note that the collective enterprise of warfare does not require the sanction or mandate of the whole community or even the majority of a community. The
fighting group must, however, have (or feel to have) some tacit support of the community in the name of which they perpetrate the hostilities.

In contrast to warfare proper, a 'state of war' (status belli) does not necessarily imply fighting, bloodshed, skirmishes or fracas, while 'belligerence' refers either to the readiness to engage in a state of war (also called 'bellicosity'), or to an existing antagonistic relationship between (political) entities (tribes, nation-states, etc.) in which violence may be used, or used intermittently, or not at all. 'Pseudo-peace' is an apt characterization of the state of affairs which characterizes most primitive societies.

Having said this, however, I believe one caveat is in order: We "actually know very little about the nature and function of aboriginal warfare, since nearly all descriptive accounts deal with intertribal warfare under the circumstances of European presence or penetration in the area..." (Hicks, 1974). Our basic ignorance concerning the native situation is highlighted here by Hicks for the Lower Colorado River area, but probably the statement is valid for primitive warfare in general, wherever it has been recorded.

Ferguson (1992) and Ferguson & Whitehead (1992), especially, made a strong case against the accepted wisdom which holds that primitive cultures are typically at war and that the primary military effect of contact with the West is the suppression of ongoing combat and pacification. In fact, however, Ferguson (1992) states: "[T]he initial effect of European colonialism has generally been quite the opposite. Contact has invariably transformed war patterns, very frequently intensified war and not uncommonly generated war among groups who previously had lived in peace. Many, perhaps most, recorded wars involving tribal peoples can be directly attributed to the circumstances of Western contact". He calls this the 'cultural Heisenberg effect'. Most notably, he shows this effect to have operated among the Tupinamba, Mundurucu, Jivaro and Yanomamö, the traditional paragons of primitive ferocity. It is not necessary to endorse the too universal claim that all primitive war was a post-contact phenomenon, to be aware of the fact that intertribal warfare may have been greatly exacerbated by it (van der Dennen, 1990).

### 2.9 The Forms and Tactics of Primitive Warfare

In his exhaustive study of war, Q.Wright (1942; 1965) gives a compact description of primitive warfare is his definition of 'Social war': "[W]arriors consist of all men of the tribe trained in the war moves from youth. Tactics involve little group formation or cooperation but consist of night raids, individual duels in formal pitched battles, or small headhunting or blood-revenge parties". The following section on weapons and techniques is largely based on Wright.
2.9.1 Weapons and Techniques

The striking weapons of primitive peoples are confined to arm-, foot-, or mouth-propelled instruments. These include war hammers, battle-axes, and swords; thrusting spears; and missile weapons, such as the hurled spear, or javelin, the arrow propelled by arm- or foot-drawn bow, or, seldom, the blowpipe. The striking edge or point of these weapons is of hard wood, stone, bone, or metal, and occasionally poison is used on the tip of arrow or spear. Among hunter-gatherers these weapons are usually not differentiated from those used in the hunt. The protection of primitive warriors consists of wood or leather shield and an occasional head or body armor of skin, feathers, textiles, or wood.

There is little of mass organization or group tactics. War is usually conducted by sudden sallies or ambushes followed by individual duels and an inclination to retreat at the first reverse. Generally, in primitive societies fighting relies mainly on striking power at a distance, with bow and arrow, and on mobility, employing the stratagem of surprise from ambush. The war is one of pounce and retreat. Mass charges, complicated tactics, a professional military class, elaborate fortifications, and war of attrition are rare and, when existent, mainly post-contact phenomena.

In primitive societies, wars, raids and feuds are primarily or exclusively male ‘occupations’ and obligations, although exceptions to this general rule have been documented. The female of the species seems occasionally to have engaged in fighting or warlike exploits in Angola, Canary Islands, Valley of the Amazon, Patagonia, Central America, Hawaii, Australia, Tasmania, Arabia, and Albania and among the Ainu and Apache (Davie, 1929; Q.Wright, 1942). In most of these cases, however, the role of the women is confined to company, sutler and entertainer, supporter and ‘cheerleader’ for the benefit of the hard core of male warriors.

Although women are very rarely fighters, among the hardly primitive 19th-century kingdom of the Fon or Dahomeans, battalions of female warriors have been reported. These women, "who for some reason or other came under the control of the king, but whom he did not desire because of their lack of personal attractiveness" (Herskovits, 1938), reportedly fought more bravely and more cruelly than their male counterparts. But this is exceptional. Among some tribes all men fight on occasions, as in Melanesia (Wedgwood, 1930); among others certain age groups alone fight, as among the Masai and other East African pastoral tribes; and among others fighting is confined to duels by a few champions. Only among the pastoral and agricultural peoples is there anything like a professional military class. Some have permanent war chiefs; some have dual chieftainship (peace- and war-chiefs), and some have neither.
Tactics and strategy also show variation. The surprise attack or raid with a brief period of fighting, and then withdrawal is the most common stratagem (considerably varying in bloodiness and destructiveness). Pitched battles on the field are relatively uncommon and far less bloody, and more ritualized, than the surprise attack. The discipline necessary for group tactics and strategic movement is most developed among the pastoral people, such as the the Masai of East Africa (Davie, 1929), and the Pondo of South Africa, who have a territorial military organization including all able-bodied men (Hunter, 1936).

In summary, then, it appears that, as general culture advances, the size of the fighting group tends to increase; the warrior class tends to become more specialized; missile weapons tend to be superseded by piercing or striking weapons; discipline and morale tend to increase; and the battle of pounce and retreat tends to give way to the battle of mass attack and maneuver. With these changes the casualties and destructiveness of war tend to become greater.

2.9.2 The Raid

The raid (dawn attack or ambush) was the most common form of primitive warfare, and it was responsible for the highest number of casualties. Following Divale’s (1973) account, the raiding or war party usually consisted of some ten or so men, but could number over a hundred, and was usually organized by the village headman or the men from a family with a death to avenge. Group size was very important in primitive warfare because political strategy revolved around attacking weaker and smaller groups with a lesser ability to strike back. Most primitive warfare was intracultural in nature (§ 2.6) - that is, Yanomamö villages (Venezuela) raided other Yanomamö villages, and Kapauku villages (New Guinea) fought other Kapauku. Sometimes though the warfare would be along the borders of neighboring cultures, such as between the Eskimo and the Indians of the interior of Alaska and Canada (e.g., Hearne, 1795; Jenness, 1932; Divale, 1973; Irwin, 1987).

The war party, after leaving the village, sometimes amidst much ceremony, entered enemy territory with great caution. Surprise attack was the key element in this type of primitive warfare, and the war party usually employed stealthy tactics and ambush. Solitary women or men encountered by the war party in the field were slain, and this was sometimes considered sufficient trophy to return home in triumph. Occasionally the enemy village was attacked outright, but this was usually impossible because of various defense alarm systems, such as barking dogs and dried brush placed around the village. At dawn the raiders hid around the enemy village or camp. Upon awakening, the enemy would leave the village, individually or in small groups, and go into the bush to relieve themselves. At this point the attack was launched. The war party tried to kill as many people as possible, take the necessary heads, or scalps, whatever young women or other booty they could capture, and flee, usually running for hours until it was fairly certain they were not being pursued.
A raid was considered a failure if any member of the war party was killed, regardless of how many enemy were slain. Quite often raids were a complete failure in the sense that no enemy were slain, or worse, only an attacker was killed. Sometimes a slaughter ensued, but most often only one or two people were killed on a raid. Casualties might be considerable, though, because the total number killed mounted up from the sometimes dozens of these raids that might occur each year. When the war party returned home, there was often dancing and celebrating, although the warriors who made the raid usually took little part, thus giving everyone an opportunity to engage, at least indirectly, in the warfare and to achieve greater solidarity and cohesion for the group (Divale, 1973).

2.9.3 The Treacherous Feast

As with all warfare, treachery was an acceptable strategy of primitive societies. A standard procedure among the Yanomamö, as graphically described by Chagnon (1968 et seq.), was for one group to invite another to its village or camp for a feast. In primitive politics intergroup or intervillage feasting was a process by which alliances were built. Even if the group invited to the feast suspected a doublecross, they would usually accept the invitation because to refuse might imply fear, which in tribal politics was an open invitation to be attacked. A third group in treacherous complicity with the host village would wait in hiding, to attack when the visitors were drunk or sleeping or about to return home. Sometimes the hosts themselves would suddenly turn on their unsuspecting guests. Treachery usually resulted in tremendous slaughter because the victims were unaware and in close physical proximity to their killers. It was not uncommon for most of the visiting men to be murdered and most of the women to be stolen (Divale, 1973).

2.9.4 The Pitched Battle

The final type of primitive warfare was the pitched battle, which involved anywhere from a few dozen to a few thousand warriors and was conducted in a prearranged area or no-man's land along the borders of the warring groups. Each army was composed of warriors, usually related by marriage, from several allied villages. Even though large numbers of warriors were involved, there was little or no organized, concerted, military effort; instead, multiple individual duels were engaged in.

The lined-up warriors shouted insults and obscenities at their opponents and hurled spears or fired arrows. Agility in dodging arrows was highly praised and young warriors pranced about. The women often came to watch these wars and would sing or goad their men on. Women (and sometimes even children) also occasionally retrieved spent enemy arrows so that their husbands could shoot them back at their foes. Regularly occurring pitched battles were generally
found among ‘advanced’ tribal people with fairly dense populations, such as in highland New Guinea.

In spite of the huge array of warriors involved in these pitched battles, little killing took place. Because of the great distance between the opposing warriors and the relative inefficiency of primitive weapons, combined with a young warrior’s agility to dodge arrows, direct hits rarely occurred.

The fighting often stops for the day after one side has exacted a death, with the losers mourning their loss and the other side celebrating its victory within sight of each other. Or the opposing parties retreat after having sustained some casualties, or simply because of imminent nightfall, which makes the brave warriors return to the safety of their homes before the evil spirits of the night catch up with them.

There are often deliberate steps taken to ensure that the killing does not get too efficient. There are Californian Indian peoples, for instance, who are well aware that arrows with flights are more accurate and always fit feathers to its hunting arrows - but leaves them off its war arrows (Kroeber, 1925).

Similarly, the Piegan (Blackfoot) and Shoshone Indians, who engaged in large-scale battles on foot before the use of horses spread to the American plains, used to form lines facing each other that were just barely within arrow range and shoot at their opponents while taking cover behind shields three feet in diameter. Though they also had more lethal weapons - lances and battle-axes - they never closed in to use them unless they had overwhelming numerical superiority (Walker, 1972).

A number of primitive peoples engaged in warfare by means of regulated or expiatory combat. This was common among the Australian aborigines, for whom the ‘makarata’ of the Murngin tribe, as described by Warner (1930) is a nice example. The Murngin had distinctive names for six types of warfare: (1) Fight within a camp, (2) secret interclan killing, (3) night raid on a camp, (4) general open fight, (5) pitched battle, and (6) ceremonial peace ordeal (Warner, 1930).

The lack of pre-battle military organization, as well as the virtual absence of any discernible tactical coordination, command-structure organization and strategic anticipations of the violence clash itself, led Turney-High (1949), as we saw, to characterize such ‘wars’ as ‘submilitary’, and hardly deserving the name. We will encounter more examples of war-mitigation (deliberate attempts to reduce or confine the lethality and destructiveness of the violent encounter) and primitive ius in bello later on (Ch. 7).

Perhaps the most graphic description of pitched battle among primitive peoples has been given by Hart & Pilling (1960) on the Tiwi, a polygynous and gerontocratic tribe of northern Australia:

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-
thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator was hit.

As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night - by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband - but when the war party left the next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battle field a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only 'battle' in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought at Rongu in late 1928.

On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until late afternoon, all the men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other 'were all his fault', and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader.

In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions (Hart & Pilling, 1960).

Among early American Indians quite similar practices occurred in California and in the Northern Plains. In prearranged fights among the Maidu of California both sides lined up out of arrow range, women and children behind the chiefs of both sides standing together on a knoll to watch the fun. When all was ready, the young men of the 'defendants' advanced within range, unarmed. A volley of arrows was released against them. But because the men had been trained as artful dodgers since boyhood, no one would be hit. While they retired to get their weapons, the children of the attackers ran out to pick up the
arrows for reuse. Next their fighters advanced to be shot at. So it went for hours, until at last some tired leaper was struck. At this, his side, defeated, broke and ran. The victors chased them with yells of triumph. Those who were caught were pummeled. Then it was over. Everyone returned to the battlefield. The women brought forth food, and both sides together enjoyed a peace feast - or was it a picnic? The victors paid compensation to the losers for having wounded their man (Hoebel, 1949).

Somewhat more serious but hardly more dangerous were the early fights on the Northern Plains. When a group of Cree joined with the Blackfoot to make war on the Shoshones, about 1725, they spent a few days in speeches, feasting, and dancing before marching off to meet the foe. The Shoshones were ready for them. According to the account of Sankamappee, the Cree chief "Both parties made a great show of themselves. After some singing and dancing, they sat down on the ground and placed their large shields before them, which covered them. We did the same... Theirs were all placed touching each other... Our headed arrows did not go through their shields, but stuck in them; on both sides several were wounded, but none lay on the ground; and night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other". And this was a battle in which some 800 men took part. Such behavior is 'rudimentary warfare', according to Hoebel (1949), who relates the above stories, but it hardly deserves to be called 'war'.

In the past, many anthropologists viewed these pitched battles and, noting the small number of casualties, concluded that much or all of primitive warfare was a ritual or game. As, for example, Dyer (1985) wrote recently: "[I]t is an important ritual, an exciting and dangerous game, and perhaps even an opportunity for self-expression, but it is not about power in any recognizable modern sense of the word, and it most certainly is not about slaughter".

Warfare among egalitarian societies, as also Service (1975) pointed out, is seldom a pitched and bloody affair, because this kind of society cannot sustain very many men in the field, and hence the battles are neither large nor protracted. But more important in limiting the scale of war is the egalitarian nature of the society. Leadership is ephemeral, for one thing, and the leader has no strong organization or authority to conscript or otherwise force people to serve his bidding. And he cannot force people to be brave by threats of legal punishment for dereliction of duty. Warriors left on their own usually will not run grave risks to their lives, and hence pitched battles are rare. When a battle does take place it is more noisy than bloody.

However, this 'game' perspective is now questioned, and it is suggested that such warfare was extremely effective, perhaps even overeffective, in the sense that many cultural controls existed the primary aim of which was the regulation and limitation of warfare (Divale, 1973).
Prehomeric and Homeric Greece still retained many primitive features in their warfare patterns (Cf. Loenen, 1953). Garlan (1975) writes about the ritual wars in ancient Greece: "Its ideal pattern, never fully realized, is as follows: between communities linked to each other by traditional ties of neighborhood and of kinship, wars, rather like long-term tournaments of competitions (agones), take place periodically within a religious context of a mythical or cultural nature, according to rules which restrict the object and extent of the conflict". She calls this state of affairs "micro-war or pseudo-peace".

2.10 General Characteristics of Primitive War

In this section I shall review the macroquantitative research on primitive war, i.e., studies employing more or less sophisticated statistical techniques or multivariate analyses on cross-cultural data bases, or subsets thereof called 'samples', which are collections of empirical data on properties, behaviors and customs, institutions, social and political organization, and other characteristics of human societies. Virtually all contemporary studies use the data base compiled by the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF), New Haven, U.S.A., or samples like the Cross-Cultural Summary (Textor, 1967), the Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1967), the World Ethnographic Sample (Murdock, 1957), and the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (Murdock & White, 1969).

There are two main reasons for reviewing this extensive literature. In the first place, the empirical studies reveal the constraints and variability which the theories should explain and clarify. In the second place, these synchronic studies may also reveal some consistent diachronic patterns, and thus may shed some light on the evolution of human warfare.

As will be seen, quite a number of specific hypotheses have been tested cross-culturally. Let us first look how the assumption of universal human belligerence, the notion that all societies everywhere and always have conducted wars, holds up against the empirical evidence.
2.11 The Hobbes-Rousseau Controversy

Following the Renaissance, two well-defined theories of the origin of war had become widely distributed among social thinkers. One of these was sponsored by the social contract theorists and by Hugo Grotius (1625) and Thomas Hobbes (1651) in particular. This theory, which was very widely accepted in the 17th and 18th centuries, held that the scarcity of resources in relation to the numbers and needs of early man, the lack of adequate technological development among primitive peoples, and their inherent suspicion and dislike of strangers made it inevitable that primitive society should be characterized by constant warfare (Bernard, 1944). However, the social-contract theorists of the 17th century were less concerned with explaining the causes of war than with describing what they conceived to be the war-ridden condition of primitive society, though in his *Leviathan* Hobbes (1651) made an interesting attempt to identify the causes as competition, diffidence, and glory. Nor did they attempt to determine when warfare first began. The lack of an evolutionary theory of society and the general acceptance of the doctrine of human origin set forth in Genesis made a theory of the gradual evolution of war seem unnecessary, if it did not render it inconceivable (Bernard, 1944).

Hobbes may be taken as fairly typical of the general opinion of the time regarding the warlike attitudes and proclivities of early man. His aim was to describe human behavior in terms of a kind of social physics. Thus the tendency of physical objects to pursue their own trajectory when left to themselves, could be translated into an egoistic principle for human beings: That they pursue their own interests in the line of least resistance. This, of course, is the source of social conflict, of "Warre, as is of every man against every man" (*bellum omnium contra omnes*).

Hobbes describes the status naturalis, the state of nature as the status hostilis. Man's behavior, which, in the state of nature, is governed not by reason, but by passion and desire. Reason orients Man's desires. "For the Thoughts, are to the Desires, as Scouts, and Spies, to range abroad, and find the way to the things desired". In Hobbes' philosophy the *homo homini Deus* and the *homo homini lupus* must be set side by side. On the one hand, reason teaches Man to be peaceable, loyal and helpful. But, on the other hand, reason teaches us that desires predominate in Man's nature and that his life is constantly in danger (Spits, 1977). The most dangerous of all desires is that for prestige, the craving for honor. Everything that gives joy to the mind relates to honor and fame. Vanity - and everything is vanity - is the root of all evil, the source of all vice. It makes Man crave for power. This brings him to his often quoted statement: "I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire for Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death".

On this account, states as well as tribal societies are led to war because of
competition for material possessions, mistrust, fear, and the pursuit of power and glory, "with fear being the prime motive in that is supposedly leads to a concern to secure what we already have" (Walker, 1987; cf. Meyer, 1977; Spits, 1977).

Diametrically opposed views were espoused by Rousseau (1762) in his *Le Contrat Social*, building on Montesquieu’s ideas exposed in *L’Esprit des Lois* (1748). Rousseau introduced the concept of the ‘Noble Savage’, who did not wage war because he simply had no reason for doing so. Not only because he lacked the material incentive (there were no benefits to gain), but also because he lacked the necessary ‘infrastructure’ which was expressed thus by Glover & Ginsberg (1934):

"The antithesis between war and peace is really inapplicable to the simple conditions in which these [primitive] peoples live. Anything like the organized and aggressive warfare which we find in early history and among the more advanced of the simpler societies can have no place in the life of the simplest societies, for this implies organization, discipline and differentiation between leaders and led which the people of the lowest culture do not possess. But if these do not have war, neither have they peace. We must think of war not as a genus uniquely opposed to peace but as a species of violence opposed to social order and security" (Glover & Ginsberg, 1934).

Property, which Rousseau singles out in the second Discourse as a crucial factor in inequality and consequently in violence, should not be seen as a cause of war but as a consequence of the ‘cupidity’ and insecurity that dominate men once their original isolation comes to an end (Hoffmann, 1965).

This so-called Hobbes-Rousseau controversy, a persistent and irreconcilable one, has dominated the anthropological, sociological, and psychological literature till today. The first to tackle the problem empirically was Adam Ferguson. In 1767 Adam Ferguson published *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, which he based on Montesquieu while extending the latter’s method by drawing more upon the observations of primitive peoples made by contemporaneous missionaries and travelers such as Charlevoix, Lafitau, Dampier, and others, as well as the classical sources (Service, 1975). Ferguson concluded: "We had occasion to observe that in every rude state the great business is war; and that in barbarous times, mankind, being generally divided into small parties, are engaged in almost perpetual hostilities". War, armed group antagonism "has been the great business of mankind since time immemorial".

Ferguson more than agreed with Montesquieu about the falseness of the common idea that ‘Man in a state of nature’ was free to be his natural self. Man is governed by society, and never was outside it - he has always wandered or settled ‘in troops and companies’. Ferguson saw human nature as being composed of many opposite propensities - sociability and egoism, love and
hostility, cooperation and conflict - an amalgam that is necessary to allow for the different kinds of characteristics demanded by society in different times and places. Ferguson felt - contrary to Rousseau’s belief - that conflict had a positive function in cultural evolution, and for that matter even in individual psychology: the stronger the hostility to outsiders, the closer the internal bonds of the collectivity; the very meaning of friendship is acquired from a knowledge of enmity (Service, 1975).

These visions are not, however, as diametrically opposed as might prima facie appear. They are differences of emphasis rather than essential distinctions. Although "belligerence is a concomitant of increasing civilization" (Broch & Galtung, 1966), that does not mean that most primitive cultures lived in a paradisiac condition of perpetual peace and blissful harmony. On the contrary, the terms ‘pseudo-peace’ (Garlan, 1975) or ‘Friedlosigkeit’ (Hartmann, 1915) are more appropriate. "It is interesting", Service (1975) notes, "that the actual nature of primitive prestate society as we now know it ethnologically can support both Hobbes and Rousseau, each in part. War, as Hobbes meant it - as threat or imminence as much as action - certainly is an omnipresent feature of primitive life, as is, in part, an appearance of the Rousseauian peace and generosity. As we shall see, these two aspects of social life coexist; the threats of violence caused by the ego-demands of individuals are countered by social demands of generosity, kindness, and courtesy". Long ago, Sumner (1911) answered the question whether man began in a state of peace or a state of war as follows:

"They began with both together. Which preponderated is a question of the intensity of the competition of life at the time. When that competition was intense, war was frequent and fierce, the weaker were exterminated or

---

2 The condition of "almost perpetual hostilities", or relative peacelessness among primitive peoples and early hominids was confirmed, after Ferguson, by Waitz (1859-62), Lyell (1863), Lubbock (1870), Tylor (1874), Jähns (1880; 1893), Gumplovicz (1883 et seq.), Helliwald (1883), Bagehot (1884), Spencer (1885 et seq.), Vaccaro (1886), Maine (1888), James (1890, 1910), Ratzel (1894), Novikow (1896), Vierkandt (1896), de Molinari (1898), Schultz (1900), Schaeffle (1900), Topinard (1900), Frobenius (1903), Lagorgette (1906), Steinmetz (1907; 1929), Sumner (1911), Boas (1912), McDougall (1914), Hartmann (1915), Jerusalem (1915), Weule (1916), Knabenhaus (1917), Keller (1918), Müller-Lyer (1921), Hobhouse (1924), Sumner & Keller (1927), van Bemmelen (1928), Davie (1929), Andreski (1954), Bigelow (1969, 1975), Alexander (1971, 1979), E.O. Wilson (1978), Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1979, 1986), Cohen (1984), Krippendorff (1985), Dupuy & Dupuy (1986), Shaw (1985), Shaw & Wong (1987, 1988) and most contemporary evolutionary anthropologists and sociobiologists. Relative peace as the primeval condition of mankind was advocated by Montesquieu (1748), Rousseau (1755; 1762), Letourneau (1895; although Letourneau is ambiguous on this point), Westermarck (1889; 1907), Kropotkin (1902), Holsti (1912; 1913), Anthony (1917), Perry (1917; 1923), de Lavussan (1918), Dickinson (1920), Dewey (1922), Rivers (1922), G.E. Smith (1924), Wheeler (1928), Cleland (1928), van der Bij (1929), Schmitthenner (1930), MacLeod (1931), Benedict (1934), Malinowski (1936; 1941); Mead (1940 et seq.), and most contemporary cultural anthropologists.
absorbed by the stronger, the internal discipline of the conquerors became stronger, chiefs got more absolute power, laws became more stringent, religious observances won greater authority, and so the whole societal system was more firmly integrated. On the other hand, when there were no close or powerful neighbors, there was little or no war, the internal organization remained lax and feeble, chiefs had little power, and a societal system scarcely existed”.

2.11.1 A Study of War

A further impetus to the notion of the universality of primitive war probably came from Quincy Wright’s (1942) *opus magnum A Study of War* (actually a collective enterprise, and numbering some 1600 pages), in which a small section is devoted to primitive war: "Appendix IX. Relation between warlikeness and other characteristics of primitive peoples", comprising a cross-cultural sample of some 650 distinctive primitive peoples, arranged alphabetically by continent and categorized with respect to warlikeness and other characteristics, and based on the list of peoples used by Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915). This is followed by statistical tabulations indicating the relationship between warlikeness and a series of other variables such as habitat, political and social organization, etc. Furthermore, Wright introduced the important distinction between 4 types of primitive war: defensive, social, economic, and political.

*Defensive war* was coded if war is never embarked upon except for immediate defense of the group against attack, with the inclusion of a few tribes who do not even defend themselves from attack. This category comprised 5% of the total sample.

If war is embarked upon for purposes of revenge, religious expiation, sport, or personal prestige, this was coded *social war*. This category comprised 59% of the total sample.

If war, in addition to utilization for defensive and social purposes, is an important method for acquiring slaves, women, cattle, pastures, agricultural lands, or other economic assets (including the provision of victims for human sacrifice), this was coded *economic war*. This category comprised 29% of the total sample.

Finally, if war is fought not only for defensive, social, and economic purposes but also to maintain a ruling class in power and to expand the area of empire or political control, this was coded *political war*. This category comprised 7% of the total sample.

Notice that
(a) *In toto* this means 95% warlike peoples versus 5% unwarlike, a result which seems to substantiate the notion of universal belligerence.
(b) In terms of cultural level, "It seems clear that the collectors, lower hunters,
and lower agriculturists are the least warlike, the higher hunters and higher agriculturists are more warlike, while the highest agriculturalists and the pastorals are the most warlike of all". A conclusion which seems to support van der Bij’s (1929) general conclusion, and which seems to indicate that belligerence is a concomitant of increasing civilization (See § 2.11.3 and 2.11.4). Furthermore, these studies indicate that wanton cruelty, human sacrifice, and a general low valuation of life, do not seem to be a function of 'primitivity'; they are rather phenomena manifesting themselves on the level of chieftoms, preliterate kingdoms and hierocracies.

(c) Regarding the motives of primitive war, the contemporary emphasis on 'materialism' is emphatically not endorsed by Wright. At several places in the text he states this quite clearly: Primitive wars "seldom have the object of territorial aggression or defense until the pastoral or agricultural stage of culture are reached, when they become a major cause of war" (p.76). And "primitive peoples only rarely conduct formal hostilities with the object of achieving a tangible economic or political result" (p.58). "If acquisitive motives play a part in primitive war, the commodity sought is likely to be an object of magic, ritual or prestige value rather than of food value" (p.75).

Table 2.11.1 shows the primitive peoples in Wright’s data classified by the four types of warfare and level of economic culture. It will be observed that 64 % of all the cases tabulated fall into the combined categories of defensive and social war. Second, among hunters 83 % of all the cases fall into these classifications, and none whatsoever into the category of political war. On the other hand, pastoral peoples tend to be warlike in the accepted sense, with agriculturists less so.

Table 2.11.1: Number of cases practicing each type of warfare in Q.Wright’s data, classified by level of economic culture (after Schneider, 1950).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Econ. Culture</th>
<th>Defensive War</th>
<th>Social War</th>
<th>Economic War</th>
<th>Political War</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Hunters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Hunters</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Agriculturists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Agriculturists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Agriculturists</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Pastorals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Pastorals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>588</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

from A Study of War, Appendix IX.

All in all, Wright’s conclusions seem to confirm the notion of universal belligerence, and so it has entered the cocktail-party wisdom of the average
Western intellectual. There are, however, apart from some minor flaws and shortcomings in Wright’s sample (e.g., Wurrunjerri and Yara Yara refer to the same Australian tribe, and not to two different ones; and the same holds for Hopi and Moqui, and Hottentots and Khoi-khoi, etc.), other reasons to doubt the validity and representativeness of his list.

Interestingly, Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915), who compiled the original list which Wright used for his statistical analysis, were much more reserved in their conclusions. They write:

The question has been raised whether the traditional view of early society as one of constant warfare is really justified by the facts. There is, in fact, no doubt that to speak of a state of war as normal is in general a gross exaggeration. Relations between neighbouring communities are in general friendly, but they are apt to be interrupted by charges of murder owing to the belief in witchcraft, and feuds result which may take more or less organised form.

There seems to be a persistent misunderstanding in the literature about Hobhouse et al.’s list. For example, Malmberg (1983), in his *Human Territoriality*, writes:

"In their examination of 311 'primitive' societies Hobhouse, Wheeler and Ginsberg (1930: 228-233) found that 298 showed war and feud behaviour distributed through all the grades while in 9 certain and 4 doubtful cases war was not known" (Malmberg, 1983: 107; italics added).

This author misquotes the figures, obviously because he did not consult the original source thoroughly, thus suggesting that virtually all peoples had war in their repertoire. Such misquotations have a nasty habit to assume a life of their own. For a similar uncritically parotting of fanciful figures on contemporary wars, see Jongman & van der Dennen (1988).

Such a vast discrepancy between the figures provided by Hobhouse et al. (298 cases of war or feuds) and those of Wright (95% of the total sample: almost twice as much) requires explanation. Wright states that he used additional literature published after 1915 to code his sample. It is quite possible that he found information on the presence of war and/or feuding which was not available to Hobhouse et al. However, this is unlikely to explain all the difference.

Unfortunately, Wright lumped together in his category 'social warfare' all the subtle, but crucial, distinctions made by Hobhouse et al. regarding the maintenance of public justice (e.g., retaliation and self-help, regulated fight, expiatory fight, etc.). This is, for instance, what Hobhouse et al. had to say about the Australian tribes in their list:

"The expiatory combats and the regulated fights of the Australians are also all
of them palpably means of ending a quarrel, or marking a point beyond which it is not to go. They do not seek to punish a wrong but to arrest vengeance for wrong at a point which will save the breaking-out of a devastating fight".
I will leave it to the reader to decide whether such conflict-limiting procedures merit to be labeled 'social warfare'. Many of such and similar cases of private or public redress, retaliation, petty feuding, etc., have been classified as 'social warfare' by Wright. The remaining numerical difference, however, is still considerable.

Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg’s study was the first quantitative evidence that warfare is not a universal human characteristic.
Also Swanton (1943) surveyed the anthropological literature for warfare and warlike attitudes among the world’s societies and found that there were as many that were peaceable as warlike; a result that matches the Hobhouse et al. findings. Swanton’s study apparently never penetrated the scientific community.

Another early cross-cultural, quantitative study of war was conducted by Simmons in 1937. However, this work, too, has been completely overlooked by the research literature, and was only recently rediscovered by Rudmin (1990). Simmons coded 71 societies for 109 variables, including 'prevalence of warfare'. Rudmin cluster-analyzed the variables significantly correlated with warfare in Simmons’ sample, and found three distinct clusters.
The first cluster might be labelled 'group life'. The appearance of this single variable as a cluster distinct from the other correlates of warfare supports the argument that warfare is primarily a phenomenon of social organization. As Margaret Mead (1962 et seq.), among others, has argued, not all violence is warfare. All societies have some amount of violence, but not all of them have organized war. Simmons had many measures of violence, including blood revenge, human sacrifice, and infanticide. None of these were highly significant correlates of warfare, however.
The second cluster found by Rudmin might be labelled 'agricultural social ecology'. In accordance with Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) Simmons

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3 The only publication in which I found this study ever mentioned is Mary LeCron Foster's (1989) *Is War Necessary?*. Unfortunately, I have been unable to lay hands on Swanton’s monograph, and therefore I could not check the data.

(1937) concluded that agriculturalists, as opposed to hunter-gatherers, were warlike. It would seem, he reasoned, that agriculture requires the permanent, exclusive use of land. Therefore acquisition and defense of land becomes an essential aspect of the agricultural social ecology. Agricultural societies also produce the surpluses that release some members of society from productive tasks to militaristic tasks.

Cluster three would seem to indicate that a particular social order encourages war, a social order that might be called 'dominance stratification'. It is important to note that this cluster is distinct from 'group life', and thus should not be interpreted as social organization per se. Rather it is a complex social order, with positions of command and positions of obedience, with the additional militaristic touch of 'mining and smelting of metals'. However, the interpretation that such war-prone social organization is necessarily patriarchal, misogynist or anti-feminist found little evidence here. Simmons included 40 variables that were gender-defined. Yet none of them were highly significant correlates of warfare.

2.11.2 Other General Conclusions from the Q.Wright Study

Wright offers a number of propositions and conclusions on the basis of his statistical findings, arranged by geography, race, culture, and sociology.

Geographically, people may be divided according to the continent in which they live. Among primitive people economic and political war has been least developed in Australia and most developed in Africa. European civilization seems to have sprung from very warlike primitive peoples, while America and Asia exhibit both very warlike and very unwarlike people.

More significant geographical classifications can be made according to the climatological and topographical environment of peoples.

Climatologically, a temperate or warm, somewhat variable, and stimulating climate favors warlikeness. However, it also favors civilization (Cf. Huntington, 1919). The favored regions have developed civilization or have been occupied by civilization, leaving the primitive people only the less satisfactory environments. As Marett (1933) states: "The world as it is now constituted consists of the piratical nations, thickly and firmly established in the world’s great areas of intercommunication and characterization, with dwindling folk of no importance scattered about in the odd corners, and lucky to be even there". Among contemporary primitive people the largest proportion of the warlike live in hot regions of medium climatic energy (Q.Wright, 1942; 1965). Topographically, primitive people inhabiting deserts or the seashore are more likely to be warlike than those in forests and mountains, and those in the

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5 Strangely enough, Otterbein (1989, 1991) found that "the greater the dependence upon hunting, the greater the frequency of warfare ($r = .45, p < .01$)". See also Ember (1978).
grasslands are the most warlike of all. "If the genus Homo first differentiated on grassland and steppe, as held by Osborn (1929), Halperin (1936) and others, warlikeness may have been an original human characteristic".
Warlikeness appears to be related to the stimulating character of the climate and to the lack of barriers to mobility rather than to the economic difficulty of the environment.

Among primitive peoples it cannot be said that race [Remember that in those days 'race’ was not considered 'politically incorrect’ or a 'four-letter word’] is very closely related to war practices, although Pygmies and Australoids seem to be the least warlike; Negroes, Hamites, and whites the most warlike; with the red, yellow, and brown races occupying an intermediate position. Certain of the subraces belonging to these more warlike races, however, such as the Papuans, Dravidians, Arctics, and Eskimos, are quite unwarlike. Letourneau (1881; 1895) and Davie (1929) find the most peaceable people in the Mongolian race, and the latter regards the Negro as the most warlike race, although both recognize the great variations with respect to warlikeness within all races.

Culturally, the collectors, lower hunters, and lower agriculturalists are the least warlike. The higher hunters and higher agriculturalists are more warlike, while the highest agriculturalists and the pastorals are the most warlike of all.

Sociologically, primitive peoples may be classified into those who are integrated in primary (clan), secondary (village), tertiary (tribe), and quaternary (tribal federations or states) groups. In general, the first are the least and the latter the most warlike.
In general, the more the division of labor, the more warlike; the peoples with compulsory classes being the most warlike of all primitive people. Finally, the peoples with the most varied and frequent contacts are the most warlike. This is explained by Hoijer (1929), who concludes a detailed study of the causes of primitive war with the following statement:

The presence of many groups within a certain area offers - providing natural barriers do not interfere - opportunities for numerous cultural contacts. In striving to remain a tribal entity and to preserve itself physically, the group must perfect a strong social organization and a powerful war machinery. Needless to say, these strivings are unconscious. If they fail, they lose their group identity, if, indeed, they are not annihilated altogether. Those who succeed, establish strong tribal organizations whose lives can only be maintained by hostility - warfare becomes the necessary means of preserving group identity, in primitive society (Hoijer, 1929).
Similarly, Sumner (1906) wrote: "The closer the neighbors, and the stronger they are, the intenser is the warfare, and then the intenser is the internal organization and discipline of each". Also MacLeod (1931) insisted that "the form of a people’s state is a function of the people’s contacts".

It would appear, then, that the seriousness and degree of institutionalization of war among primitive peoples is related more closely to the complexity of culture, political organization, and extra-group contacts than to race or physical environment, although a warm but stimulating climate and an environment favorable to mobility over wide areas seem also to be favorable to warlikeness. These conclusions with respect to the static circumstances of warlikeness and unwarlikeness among primitive peoples suggest the following generalizations with respect to the dynamics of the situation.

Unwarlikeness has been the result of prolonged opportunity of neighboring groups to achieve equilibrium in relation to one another and to the physical environment. This opportunity has only been offered if the physical environment has been stable and if peoples of different culture have not interfered. The latter has resulted from natural barriers, lack of means of travel, or inhospitableness of climate. Reciprocally, warlikeness has resulted from frequent disturbances of the equilibrium of a group with respect to its physical environment or its neighbors. The first has usually resulted from climatic changes, migrations, or the invention or borrowing of new types of economic technique. The second has usually resulted from migrations, invasions, or other influences bringing a group into continuous contact with a very different culture. Among primitive peoples borrowing or invention of means of mobility or more efficient weapons promoting migration, invasion, or expansion of contacts increases warlikeness. Cleland (1928) thinks warlikeness was greatly stimulated by the use of metal, which necessitated expeditions to get ore and created a differential in military efficiency, making exploitation of the nonmetal users by the metal users practicable. Wissler (1914) comments on the influence of the horse, borrowed from Spaniards in the seventeenth century, in stimulating predatory warfare in the North American Plains culture. Such borrowing or invention proceeds very slowly among primitive groups unless forced by contact with much more civilized peoples.

In summary, the most important conclusions to be derived from the Wright study are the following:

- War as a legitimate instrument for plunder or conquest is little known among primitive peoples.
Primitive peoples only rarely conduct formal hostilities with the object of achieving a tangible economic or political result. Neither territorial conquest nor seizure of slaves nor plunder of economic goods is characteristic of primitive warfare. Wars for political domination, so important among civilized peoples, hardly exist among the primitive collectors. Wars of independence are unknown among the most primitive peoples because slavery, subjection, and class stratification are unknown. War to proselytize others to their religion is unknown among primitive peoples. The most primitive peoples, isolated and uncorrupted by contact with higher cultures, often have neither war nor brutality in their mores. Thus, the more primitive the people, the less warlike it tends to be.

Q. Wright analyzed the quantitative evidence regarding primitive war rather exhaustively, given the state of the art. He ignored, however, some epiphenomena of primitive war, maybe because that ground had already been covered by Hobhouse et al. Their findings regarding Attitude to the Enemy, Cannibalism, and Human Sacrifice are briefly discussed.

**Attitude to the Enemy**: Ignoring the pastoral peoples, for whom the numbers were too small to be of value, Hobhouse et al. found that (a) The practice of killing some or all of the vanquished predominates and is nearly constant till the highest agricultural stage is reached, where it drops by 50 per cent; and (b) The drop in the practice of killing prisoners in this stage is the reverse side of the equally sudden rise in the practice of enslavement. Apart from the capture of wives, the enslavement of captives is very rare below this stage.

**Cannibalism and Human Sacrifice**: The total number of cases of cannibalism is very small and almost entirely confined to the Australian peoples in their sample. The distribution of cannibalism is in fact regional rather than cultural. Cannibalism barely exists in Asia and is very rare in North America. On the other continents it appears in from 20 to 30 per cent of the cases. With regard to human sacrifice the case is different. Among pastoral peoples cannibalism and human sacrifice are almost completely absent, which can hardly be accidental. "On the other hand, the practice reaches its maximum in the two higher grades of Agriculture, no doubt in response to well-known developments of religious belief. It is remarkable that as between the second and third grades of Agriculture the movement is exactly the reverse of that of cannibalism. It may perhaps be supposed that under the better economic conditions the desire for human flesh is less but that this influence is crossed by the growth of those special superstitions which connect the shedding of
blood with the fertility of the soil”.

2.11.3 Cultural Evolution and War

Surveys of contemporary primitive societies seem to show that those living in a more or less continual state of war greatly outnumber those that are predominantly peaceful (Vaccaro, 1886; 1898; Sorokin, 1928; van der Bij, 1929; Davie, 1929; Steinmetz, 1929; Q.Wright, 1942; 1965; Turney-High, 1949; Divale, 1973; Otterbein, 1973; Ember, 1978; Ross, 1985 et seq.; Ember & Ember, 1988, 1992; among others). Although Hobhouse et al. and Q.Wright were, as we saw, substantially prudent and nuanced in their propositions about human universal warlikeness, the common wisdom of the age, especially after the publications by Lorenz, Dart and Ardrey in the sixties, was that *Homo s. sapiens* was a bloodthirsty and brutal creature under a thin veneer of ‘civilization’. Whoever might have doubted such a view - and some anthropologists, such as Lee & DeVore (1968), Service (1966), Steward (1968), Turnbull (1968) indeed defended the view that hunter-gatherers were relatively peaceful - was once more called to order. In a 1978 paper, Carol Ember shattered the ‘myth about peaceful hunter-gatherers’. She obtained ratings of frequency of warfare for a world-wide sample of 50 hunter-gatherer societies. Tabulating the warfare data, and excluding those few cases that had a little herding or agriculture, 64% had warfare occurring at least once every two years, 26% had warfare somewhat less often, and only 10% (including the !Kung) were rated as having no or rare warfare (see Table 2.11.3). Even excluding equestrian hunters and those with 50% or more dependence on fishing, warfare is rare for only 12% of the remaining hunter-gatherers. In sum, Ember concluded, hunter-gatherers could hardly be described as peaceful.

Table 2.11.3 Warfare Frequency among Hunter-Gatherers (Ember, 1978)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than once every two years</td>
<td>Andamanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Murngin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tiwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aleut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sekani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yurok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bellacoola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Squamish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klallam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maidu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less frequent</td>
<td>Dorobo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nootka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tubatulabal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or rare warfare</td>
<td>!Kung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a bonus, Ember included the following *caveat*: "[M]uch of the interest in the hunter-gatherer way of life appears to be associated with the belief that typical characteristics of recent hunter-gatherers were typical also in the Paleolithic. But even if we quantitatively establish the statistically 'normal' cultural patterns of recent hunter-gatherers, I take issue with the belief that we are entitled to infer from this information what cultural patterns must have been typical in the distant past. We know, for example, that there is substantial variation among recent hunter-gatherers in residence, subsistence, division of labor, and warfare. If these variations are the result of different causal conditions, then what has been 'typical' in recent times may only be a statistical artifact of the recent prevalence of certain causal conditions".

There has been one line of reasoning according to which cultural evolution or civilization has led to progressive mitigation of war, which, at the dawn of history, must (therefore) have been incessant, bloody and inexorable. The inexorability of warfare, according to this thesis, has gradually decreased, and the institution of war will therefore inevitably disappear in the future. In other words: primitive man was more "rapacious, bloodthirsty and warlike than civilized man" (Sorokin, 1928), and this tendency toward "humanization of war" (Steinmetz, 1929) will continue in the future, qualitatively (war will become less cruel, less sanguinary, less internecine, less genocidal), as well as quantitatively (there will be fewer casualties: "Gesetz der relativ abnehmenden Kriegsverluste" [law of relatively diminishing casualties]) (Steinmetz, 1929)6.

If this theory were correct, we would have to expect that war would be less known to, and the treatment of the vanquished more humane among, the 'higher' agricultural peoples than among the 'lowest' hunters. Facts, however, do not support this expectation. On the contrary, Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg's (1915) major conclusion was that "organized war rather develops with the advance of industry and of social organization in general". Sorokin (1928) comments, with a feeling for understatement, that their study does not appear to show any progressive mitigation of war.

Q.Wright (1942; 1965) similarly concludes that: "The more primitive the people, the less warlike it tends to be". This latter finding was fully confirmed

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6 Protagonists of this ‘humanization-thesis’ (war as a 'childhood disease of mankind') were Augustine (354-430), Emerson (1841), de Tocqueville (1863), Vaccaro (1886; 1898), Ferri (1895), Novikow (1896; 1911), Spencer (1896), Turde (1897; 1899), de Molinari (1898), Ferrero (1898), Kovalevsky (1910), Sumner (1911), Petrajitzky (1913), Jerusalem (1915). Woods & Baltzly (1915), Nicolai (1918), Sumner & Keller (1927), Linton (1940), among others. The opposite position was defended by de Lapouge (1896), Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915), Kidd (1918), Hobhouse (1924), van der Bij (1929), Davie (1929), Sorokin (1928; 1937), Engelgardt (1937), Q.Wright (1942; 1965), Hambly (1946), Turney-High (1949), Fahrenfort (1963), among others.

### 2.11.4 Belligerence and Civilization

In a trivariate reanalysis of Wright’s data, Broch (1963) and Broch & Galtung (1966) were able to ascertain that "state organization with white people, state organization in close contact with others, and white people in close contact with others all produce 100% belligerence... In other words, size contributes to belligerence (tribe and state are 'big'), and particularly when combined with territorial bases into a state. Thus, as societies expand and get a fixed territorial base, they become more dangerous to each other, especially if they are in close contact and the population is white. And a reason for this lies in the nature of territory itself: conflicts over territory are of the constant-sum variety, one party’s gain is the other party’s loss".

Broch & Galtung made no effort to improve the quality of the data utilized by Quincy Wright, as Wright had done with the Hobhouse et al. data by consulting a number of other anthropological works. What they did, however, was to exploit Wright’s data more fully using multivariate analysis techniques.

#### Table 2.11.4 The Relationship between Belligerence and Primitivity, %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index level</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defensive war</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social war</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econ. &amp; political war</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suspecting some common factor underlying much of the correlation, Broch & Galtung devised an 'index of primitivity', based on culture and subculture, political organization, and social organization: "Thus, the index will run from 0 to 6, where we find that the society scoring 0 is based on hunting in its lowest form and is a small group (clan) with stratification based on sex and age; at the other extreme, the society scoring 6 is agricultural in its highest form, with a state organization and a stratification system based on profession or caste..."
may be seen at a glance that this index catches almost all the variation there is in the data, and much better that any of the items one at a time".

Broch & Galtung carefully ruled out the possibility of a spurious correlation, and concluded that "within the framework provided by these variables and the range provided by those societies, belligerence is a concomitant of increasing civilization" (emphasis in original). Two other findings stand out as particularly important: First of all, white people, by far the most belligerent of all 'races', seem to be belligerent almost regardless of primitivity. Secondly, there is a positive interaction between degree of contact and degree of civilization when it comes to producing belligerence. In fact, these two variables together account completely for the variation in belligerence.

These data, like Wright's, are synchronic rather than diachronic, yet they strongly suggest that there is a process involved, in the sense that increasing civilization would lead to increasing belligerence (Broch & Galtung, 1966). For modern nations, too, relative economic and political power (if these may be regarded as indices of civilization) is *grosso modo* correlated with belligerence (Cf. review by van der Dennen, 1981).

In a study of 84 primitive tribes, using a different data base (Eckhardt, 1975, 1982), it was concluded that peace is 'natural' and war is 'civilized': The more developed and settled agricultural tribes engaged in more acts of killing, mutilating, and torturing the enemy than did the more primitive nomadic tribes. These results suggested that "these atrocious behaviors were a function of historical development, accompanied by social discipline and sexual frustration, rather than human nature" (Eckhardt, 1982). Furthermore, Eckhardt found that crime and punishment, as well as war, occurred more frequently in more developed cultures.

Crime, punishment, slavery, and war were less prevalent among gatherers and fishers, more prevalent among hunters, even more so among farmers and herders, and most of all among civilized city dwellers (Eckhardt, 1982).

The historical evidence of the written records left by more than 30 civilizations from all over the world suggested that "War may actually have been a child of Civilization" (Toynbee, 1950). Toynbee found no civilization without war, except possibly the early Mayan. If civilization gave birth to war, "war has proved to be the proximate cause of the breakdown of every civilization" (Toynbee, 1950), so that the war-child has always destroyed its civilized parent. However, it is difficult, if not impossible to say whether civilization 'caused' war, or whether war 'caused' civilization. "It can only be said that civilization and war grew up in some sort of love-hate relationship, interacting in such a way as to increase their atrocities over time" (Eckhardt, 1982).

On a more intuitive basis, without using elaborate statistical techniques, Holsti (1913) and van der Bij (1929) had come to the same general conclusion. Turney-High (1949), in discussing the 'military horizon', probably had a similar
idea in mind. Also the recent theorizing by Knauft (1991), which will be dealt with later on, is in accordance with the above findings.

2.11.5 War as 'Agent of Progress'

It has long been generally believed that success in warfare and higher societal complexity (cultural evolution) were related; or formulated alternatively: that war, struggle and intergroup conflict have been the principal factors of human progress, or that war is the prime mover of human (cultural, moral, spiritual) evolution: the Agent of Progress. This theory holds, in general, that old or ineffective social practices and obsolete institutions are weeded out of society through warfare. Societies survive - i.e., those successful in warfare - because their institutions are more adaptive and they expand at the expense of weaker societies, which perish. As a result of this continual process societies experience cultural evolution - e.g., they become more complex. According to the Social Darwinists, warfare is a mechanism of natural selection in and among societies (See Ch. 4).

In a broad sense, the concept of war as a prime mover of sociocultural evolution suggests that the competition between human groups became ever fiercer with the quantitative growth of these groups. Access to resources was limited by this development, and warfare became an important means for differential reproduction (Meyer, 1987).

A cross-cultural investigation conducted by Naroll & Divale (1974) failed to support the theory. They tested the hypothesis: "If warfare is the selective mechanism of cultural evolution, then militarily successful societies should tend to be higher on the scale of cultural evolution than militarily unsuccessful societies", by examining a world wide sample of 49 societies ranging from bands of hunter-gatherers to modern European societies. Military success was measured as a percentage of territorial change, in term of ground lost or gained by a society in one-hundred-year periods. Territorial change turned out to be a good objective measure of military success since 90% of all territorial change experienced by the societies in the sample was the result of warfare.

Various indices of cultural evolution were employed to measure the degree of urbanization, economic specialization, social organization, and political integration of the societies studied. The results were conclusive: None of the measures of cultural evolution were in any way related to military success.

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7 Hegel, 1821 et seq.; de Maistre, 1822; Proudhon, 1861; Spencer, 1864 et seq.; Nietzsche, 1882 et seq.; von der Goltz, 1883; Gumplovicz, 1883; Frölich, 1888; Luce, 1891; Jähns, 1893; Ratzenhofer, 1893; Ammon, 1900; Steinmetz, 1907; 1929; Constantin, 1907; Sumner, 1911; Sombart, 1913; Keller, 1916; LeBon, 1916; Bigelow, 1969; Carneiro, 1970; Alexander, 1979; among many others.
Otterbein (1970) found similar results: "Thus the evidence seems conclusive that it is the degree of military sophistication, rather than the degree of political centralization of a society, which explains its military success as measured by expanding territorial boundaries" (Otterbein, 1970). He concludes that "although military sophistication increases with an increase in political centralization, an increase in political centralization is not a necessity in order for a political community to develop a sophisticated military system and to become militarily successful. Moreover, the development of an efficient military organization appears to be a necessary condition for a political community to remain viable in intersocietal conflicts; whereas the development of a centralized political community which is not supported by an efficient military organization will not prevent a political community from being engulfed by militarily more efficient neighbors".

This relationship between military efficiency and territorial expansion at the expense of other political communities has been eloquently stated by Q. Wright (1942; 1965): "Out of the warlike peoples arose civilization, while the peaceful collectors and hunters were driven to the ends of the earth, where they are gradually being exterminated or absorbed, with only the dubious satisfaction of observing the nations which had wielded war so effectively to destroy them and to become great, now victimized by their own instrument".

Turney-High (1949) already emphasized that 'true' war is a matter of social organization, not of material culture or weapons. Midlarsky & Thomas (1975) surprisingly found virtually no important effect of societal development or structural complexity on war experience.

The Guttman scales of the causes of war in primitive societies (in terms of more to less 'advanced': subjugation and tribute, land, plunder, trophies and honors, defense, and revenge) constructed by Naroll (1966) and Otterbein (1970) indicate - contrary to what Q. Wright (1942; 1965) hypothesized - that prestige (Wright’s social category) is a more advanced cause of war than plunder (Wright’s economic category), in the sense that wherever reasons of prestige are found, so are economic reasons, but where economic reasons are found, prestige reasons need not be present.

In accordance with the above findings, Meyer (1987) draws the following conclusion: "While war undoubtedly played a major role in social evolution, at times accelerating change, this was not the case throughout the hunter and gatherer stage. Certainly hunter and gatherer societies are far from being ‘generally peaceable’. Their ‘primitive and endemic’ war did not exert any major impact on social change for a long period of human history, however. Only after some ‘social inventions’ had occurred, war evolved in its military form and turned into an instrument of securing access to mostly material resources". Not only are the reasons why societies wage war subject to evolutionary change, but so too are the forms of warfare, the consequences for the
participants involved, and the technology with which it is fought. The technology of warfare and its level of availability to a population will have consequences in terms of who in a society will fight as well (e.g., Fried, 1967; Harrison, 1973; See further Ch. 5).

2.11.6 Political Centralization and Military Sophistication

In an extensive study, using a sample of 50 primitive societies, Otterbein (1970) tested and confirmed the following hypotheses:

The higher the level of political centralization,

- the more likely that the military organization is composed of professionals ($\phi = .31; p = 0.05$);
- the less likely that war can be initiated by any member of the political community ($\phi = .48; p = 0.01$);
- the more likely that war will be initiated by announcement or by mutual arrangement ($\phi = .29; p = 0.10$);
- the more likely that war will be terminated by diplomatic negotiations ($\phi = .30; p = 0.10$);
- the more likely that the tactical system will be based upon both lines and ambushes ($\phi = .26; p = 0.10$);
- the more likely that shock weapons are used ($\phi = .26; p = 0.10$);
- the more likely that body armor is used ($\phi = .36; p = 0.05$);
- the more likely that field fortifications are used ($\phi = .41; p = 0.05$);
- the more advanced the reasons for going to war, or phrased differently, the greater the number of reasons for going to war ($\phi = .68; p = 0.001$);
- the higher the degree of military sophistication ($\phi = .59; p = 0.001$).

The greater the percentage of professionals in the military organization,

- the higher the degree of subordination ($\phi = .40; p = 0.02$);
- the more likely that shock weapons are used ($\phi = .41; p = 0.01$);
- the more likely that body armor is used ($\phi = .44; p = 0.01$);
- the more likely that cavalry is used ($\phi = .38; p = 0.02$).

The higher the degree of military sophistication,

- the higher the casualty rates ($\phi = .26; \text{n.s.; point biserial (pb)} = .48; p = 0.01$);
- the more likely that the political communities of a cultural unit will engage in frequent or continual offensive external war ($\phi = .17; \text{n.s.; pb} = .32; p = 0.05$);
- the more likely that the political communities of a cultural unit will be
militarily successful ($\varphi = .40; p = 0.02$).

Important hypotheses not confirmed by Otterbein (1970):

- The higher the degree of military sophistication, the less likely that the political communities of a cultural unit will be attacked ($\varphi = .15; pb = .04$). The deterrence hypothesis is not confirmed. Similar results have been obtained by Naroll (1966; 1969), Naroll et al. (1971), Naroll, Bullough & Naroll (1974), Eckhardt (1973; 1974; 1975), Tefft (1975); Cf. Ilfeld & Metzner (1970), Wallace (1972 et seq.), Weede (1975), Beer (1981), and Ferguson (1984).

- The higher the degree of military sophistication, the more likely that the political communities of a cultural unit will engage in frequent or continual internal war ($\varphi = .06; pb = -.05$). Although the frequency of internal war is not related to the degree of military sophistication of the warring political communities, it has been shown in a cross-cultural study of internal war (Otterbein, 1968) that a high frequency of internal war is characteristic of political communities which have fraternal interest groups (§ 2.11.7.4).

Strate (1985) tested the following set of hypotheses:

1. The more centralized is a political system, the more likely it is to gain territory/autonomy;
2. The incidence of sovereignty in defensive warfare should be higher than the incidence of sovereignty in other political activities;
3. Sovereignty in defensive warfare should be located at a territorial or subdivisional level as high or higher than sovereignty in any other activity;
4. A sovereign in defensive warfare should be more likely to hold sovereignty in other political activities than individuals and/or groups holding sovereignty in other activities.

Strate hypothesizes that the necessary and sufficient function of political systems is defense. Defensive activities include all of those actions of political systems which deter enemy attacks or minimize losses to life, property, and territory in the event of an attack. They include activities associated with the recruitment, training, equipping, control, and use of military units. They also include other activities such as the construction of fortifications, the establishment of military alliances, and diplomacy.

Modern evolutionary theory suggests, Strate reasons, that the function(s) of political systems are associated with a benefit(s) that enhance reproduction. If, therefore, the necessary and sufficient function of political systems is defense, this benefit is the protection that political systems afford their members from hostile groups of conspecifics. The close association in history between the
appearance and spread of large, complex political systems and warfare waged for the purposes of conquest and subjugation suggests several possible benefits of larger groups. One of these benefits is protection from predators, or for humans, protection from hostile groups of conspecifics. Another possible benefit of larger political systems is enhanced competitive ability.

Strate argues that the benefit of protection from hostile groups of conspecifics is a more persuasive explanation of the reproductive advantages of political systems larger than hunter-gatherer groups than is the benefit of enhanced competitive ability. The reproductive advantages of belonging to a political system that is able to effectively defend its members are tangential. The land, lives, and property of ego, spouse, children, and other coresident relatives are protected. The reproductive advantages of belonging to a political system that is able to conquer and subjugate other political systems, however, are far less clear.

Strate tested his hypotheses on a stratified sample of 60 societies drawn from the Ethnographic Atlas. He identified sovereignty, when sovereignty existed in a society, in eight activities: defensive warfare; internal warfare; external offensive warfare; the collection of taxes, tribute, and labor services; judicial/arbitration activities, police activities, and religious activities. He also determined the territorial or subdivisional level in the political system at which such sovereignty existed.

As predicted, the incidence of sovereignty was higher in defensive warfare (95%) than in other activities. In only three - geographically isolated - societies (Dorobo, Manihikians, and Selung) sovereignty in defensive warfare did not exist. It thus appears from these data that sovereignty in defensive warfare, except in uncommon cases of geographical isolation, is universal among political systems.

In 23 societies sovereignty in external offensive warfare was located at the same territorial level as sovereignty in defensive warfare; in 19 societies sovereignty in external offensive warfare was located at a lower territorial level or was absent. Most of the 19 had simple political systems in which there was no official with the authority to prevent attacks by raiding parties or other ad hoc military units on other political systems.

The data on location of sovereignty were also generally consistent with the other hypotheses.

Russell (1977) presented some propositions on the relationship between warfare and territorial expansion: (1) The territory of a political unit expands in direct proportion to its military sophistication (Naroll, 1966; Otterbein, 1970). (2) The territory expansion of a political unit increases in direct proportion to its previous size. (3) The territory of a political unit expands in proportion to the general level of internal cultural hostility and this effect is greater than the effect of either size or sophistication (Russell, 1972; 1973; Stewart & Jones, 1972).
Counteracting tendencies: (4) Instability increases in direct proportion to the increase in size of a political unit. (5) Instability increases in direct proportion to the increase of hostility in a political unit (Naroll, 1969). (6) The amount of political control necessary to prevent instability from increasing beyond a critical level is indirectly proportional to the product of the effects of hostility and size. This means that as hostility and size increase political control must increase at an equal rate.

2.11.7 Other Correlates of Primitive Belligerence

2.11.7.1 Primitive Militarism
Textor (1967) includes in his Cross-Cultural Summary 480 characteristics of 400 primitive societies. Textor dichotomized 428 of his variables, compiled the frequencies of his cultures in four-fold contingency tables, and obtained χ² and Φ-coefficients from these tables. The variables related to primitive ‘militarism’ have been presented by Textor (1967) and Eckhardt (1973; 1974; 1975).

Four of Textor’s variables were clearly related to militarism: (1) the prevalence of warfare, available for 43 cultures; (2) the pursuit of military glory, or militarism as an attitudinal variable, available for 86 cultures; (3) bellicosity\textsuperscript{8}, which consisted largely of preparations for war, available for 87 cultures; and (4) acts of killing, torturing, or mutilating the enemy, available for 84 cultures. These four variables were all significantly correlated with one another from .35 to .72, so that they formed a single type of primitive militarism, the principal component of which is the attitude of military glory, defined in terms of high values placed on military virtues and warfare itself, either offensive or defensive. This attitudinal variable of militarism was correlated .72 with bellicosity or war preparations, .69 with the actual prevalence of war, and .54 with the extent of killing, torturing, or mutilating the enemy (which might as well be labelled ‘sadism’ for short).

This military type, where the prevalence of warfare was associated with war preparations, confirms the findings of § 2.11.6 that preparing for war was no more of a deterrence to aggression in primitive cultures than it is in the contemporary international system.

These four militaristic variables were significantly correlated with 109 of the other 424 variables for which correlations had been obtained. The 32 variables

\textsuperscript{8} Textor (1967), following Slater, codes ‘bellicosity’ as follows: \textit{High}: When ethnographer describes tribe explicitly as currently belligerent or warlike. Or, when the majority of adult males are said to spend most of their daily life engaged in or preparing for war, raids, or homicidal vendettas. Or, when ethnographer says the tribe is feared by surrounding tribes as an aggressor. \textit{Low}: When none of the above are present and: War is said to be defined as waged primarily in revenge, or defensively, in response to the presence of warlike neighbors. Or, when tribe is described as peaceful, meek, friendly, non-aggressive, etc. Or, war, raids, vendetta, etc. are said to be absent.
in the category 'Socio-economic development' were most frequently related to actual warfare and least frequently related to sadism. Warfare was more prevalent where settlements were fixed in relation to agriculture and/or animal husbandry, and less prevalent among nomadic tribes whose subsistence was primarily gained by gathering food and fishing. Technological development (especially in metal work) was related to all four military variables. Social and political development, including the establishment of cities or towns, some hierarchical political structures, class stratification, and/or slavery, were related to all military variables except sadism. The \( \varphi \) coefficients in this category ranged from .20 to .71.

Crime rate and severity of punishment were related to all military variables, but especially to military glory (the attitudinal variable). Frustrating childhood disciplines, including pressures for early socialization, achievement, obedience, responsibility, self-reliance, and associated anxieties, were related to all military variables, but especially to military glory and sadism. Although primitive religion was generally unrelated to primitive militarism, supernatural sanctions for morality were related to military glory, and religious experts’ contributing to the development of the individual’s need to achieve was related to war preparations. The 30 variables in this disciplinary category were most frequently related to sadism and least frequently related to the prevalence of warfare. The \( \varphi \) coefficients in this category ranged from .27 to .55.

Cultures where exclusive mother-son sleeping arrangements lasted for one year or longer, where fathers avoided their sons’ wives, and where husbands avoided their mother-in-laws, were more likely to glorify war and prepare for it. This combination of anthropological variables would seem to constitute an operational definition of the Freudian Oedipus complex and its repression, so that the relationship between this psychosexual complex and primitive militarism received some confirmation from these anthropological findings. Post-partum sex taboos were related to both actual warfare and its glorification, and severe punishment for abortion was related to sadism. Sexual repression in infancy, adolescence, and adulthood (including castration anxiety and sexual segregation) was related to all aspects of primitive militarism. The \( \varphi \) coefficients in this category ranged from .23 to .54.

Correlations between militarism, frustrating discipline, and sexual repression have also been found in the attitudes and behaviors of modern individuals (Eckhardt, 1972).

All of the military variables were related to narcissism, especially in the forms of boastfulness and sensitivity to insult. Games of chance or strategy, as opposed to games of skill, were also related to all military variables. The \( \varphi \) coefficients in this ‘narcissism’ category ranged from .20 to .48.

The following features are correlated with the prevalence or non-prevalence of primitive warfare to a degree that could occur by chance less than one out of
twenty times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>34 cultures where warfare is prevalent</th>
<th>9 cultures where warfare is not prevalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- outside East Eurasia</td>
<td>- located in East Eurasia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- settlements fixed</td>
<td>- settlements non-fixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sedentary)</td>
<td>(nomadic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- husbandry of some kind</td>
<td>- husbandry absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- metal working and weaving present</td>
<td>- metal working and weaving absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- city or town present, or</td>
<td>- no city or town present, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average community size is</td>
<td>average community size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifty or greater</td>
<td>smaller than fifty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the level of political integration is</td>
<td>- the level of political integration is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the state</td>
<td>the autonomous community,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hierarchies complex</td>
<td>- hierarchies simplest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- class stratification present</td>
<td>- class stratification absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- slavery present</td>
<td>- slavery absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- emphasis on invidious display of</td>
<td>- moderate, little, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wealth</td>
<td>negative emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- level of social sanction is</td>
<td>- level of social sanction is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public corporeal sanction</td>
<td>public property sanction or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>private settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- post-partum taboo lasts longer than</td>
<td>- post-partum taboo limited or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six months</td>
<td>absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- early sexual satisfaction</td>
<td>- early sexual satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential is low</td>
<td>potential is high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- military glory emphasized</td>
<td>- military glory negligibly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 These are: Abipon, Albanians, Araucanians, Ashanti, Aztec, Chukchee, Creek, Crow, Dieri, Fang, Fon, Haida, Hano, Hebrews, Iban, Inca, Jivaro, Kazak, Küng, Kutenai, Kwakiutl, Lango, Maori, Mota, Nama, Navaho, Omaha, Rwala, Samoans, Seri, Shilluk, Trobriand, Witoto, Yakut. As cultures where warfare is common or chronic are listed: Abipon, Creek, Goajiro, Jivaro, Maricopa, Murngin, Papago, Tupinamba.

10 These are: Ainu, Andamanese, Aranda, Lapps, Semang, Toda, Vedda, Yahgun, Yukaghir. As cultures where warfare is rare or infrequent are listed: Ainu, Andamanese, Apinayé, Balinese, Carib, Cayapa, Choroti, Chukchee, Cuna, Gond, Hano, Huichol, Kazak, Khalka, Lamba, Lepcha, Naskapi, Samoyed, Tanala, Tarahumara, Tehuelche, Toda, Yakut, Zuñi.

11 Textor (1967) lists as cultures where military glory is strongly or moderately emphasized: Abipon, Ainu, Albanians, Araucanians, Ashanti, Azande, Aztec, Bemba, Bhil, Chagga, Cheyenne, Chiricahua Apache, Chukchee, Comanche, Creek, Crow, Dobeans, Fon, Ganda, Haida, Hebrews, Iban, Ifugao, Inca, Jivaro, Kaska, Kazak, Kurtatchi, Kwakiutl, Lakher, Lango, Manus, Maori,
Stewart (1971) factor analyzed the correlations among 488 of the Textor variables across a random stratified sample of 98 of the cultures. One of his 12 factors was called ‘Aggressive achievement’, and it contained the following variables: narcissism .61, bellicosity (war preparations) .56, glory (favorable attitude toward militarism) .56, boastfulness .52, achievement training in childhood .48, self-reliance training in childhood .48, warfare .42, crime .42, and full time entrepreneurs .41.

Russell (1972; 1973) used all 400 of Textor’s cultures, but only 78 of his variables which were selected on the basis of their association with primitive militarism. All measures loaded strongly on one factor. From the factor analysis, the characteristics of warlike cultures were:

1. Emphasis on narcissism - boasting and sensitivity to insult;
2. Need for achievement; tendency to display wealth;
3. Restrictiveness in child-raising;

...
(4) Punitiveness toward extramarital and premarital sex relations;
(5) Anxiety.
All forms of aggression, such as warfare, crime, theft, and punitiveness in general, were related to one another in this study (external aggression thus does not reduce hostility within the group, according to this investigation), as well as being related to emphasis on achievement, wealth, and entrepreneurial activities, suggesting that "There is thus not a constant amount of aggression in all cultures which simply takes alternative forms of release... Cultural factors themselves produce the level of hostility within a society" (Russell, 1972).
Russell further concluded that primitive warfare was primarily related to personality variables rather than to cultural variables since orthogonal rotation of his factors resulted in separating these two sets of variables from each other, with the warfare variables loading on personality but not on culture. "Warmindedness is not determined by technology or social complexity, but by psychological variables".
This conclusion would be somewhat consistent with Stewart’s factor of 'Aggressive achievement' (which is largely personal in its characteristics), but not consistent with the findings that more primitive peoples were less warlike, which emphasizes the cultural contribution to primitive militarism (§ 2.11.3). See § 2.11.5.5 for a more sophisticated analysis of the culture vs. personality contribution to violent conflict.

In a factor analysis of Textor's (1967) Cross-Cultural Summary by Stewart & Jones (1972), the seventh factor that they derived is approximately the same as Russell’s aggression/hostility factor. In Stewart & Jones’ study ‘Personal crime’ also loaded on this factor indicating that aggression internal to a culture is related to a tendency toward warfare (Cf. Russell, 1977).
Eckhardt (1975) concludes from the above studies: "[T]he anthropological findings, like those from attitude studies, point very clearly to three basic variables contributing to war in primitive cultures as well as modern societies: private property, frustrated personality, and egoistic morality. These three variables tend to go together, feeding into one another in such a way as to constitute a vicious circle".
The most militant societies are characterized by pronounced patriarchal values where masculinity is viewed as an end in itself (Machismo-syndrome). Women play an inferior secondary role and there is often a ‘tenderness taboo’. The male must be strong, athletic, brave, fierce, and authoritarian. A notable feature of the militant is a form of ascetism which eschews pleasure, especially erotic pleasure (Anti-hedonism) (Cf. Clarke, 1971).
2.11.7.2 Anti-Hedonism

Prescott (1975) advocates the view that the root cause of violence and warfare is somatosensory deprivation, i.e., the deprivation of physical sensory pleasure. Pleasure and violence have a reciprocal relationship, the presence of one inhibits the other. "Among human beings, a pleasure-prone personality rarely displays violence or aggressive behaviors, and a violent personality has little ability to tolerate, experience, or enjoy sensuously pleasing activities. As either violence or pleasure goes up, the other goes down".

In order to test this hypothesis, Prescott examined the amount of warfare and interpersonal violence in 49 primitive societies (based on Textor, 1967). The results indicated that those societies which give their infants the greatest amount of physical affection were characterized by low theft, low infant physical pain, low religious activity, and negligible or absent killing, mutilating, or torturing of the enemy. When the six, apparently deviant, societies characterized by both high infant affection and high violence were compared in terms of their premarital sexual behavior, Prescott found that five of them exhibited premarital sexual repression, where virginity is a high value of these cultures. "It appears that the beneficial effects of infant physical affection can be negated by the repression of physical pleasure (premarital sex) later in life".

The seven societies characterized by both low infant physical affection and low adult physical violence were all found to be characterized by permissive premarital sexual behavior. Thus, the detrimental effects of infant affectional deprivation seem to be compensated for later in life by sexual body pleasure experiences during adolescence. These findings led to a revision of the somatosensory deprivation theory from a one-stage to a two-stage developmental theory in which the physical violence in 48 of the 49 cultures could be accurately classified. "In short, violence may stem from deprivation of somatosensory pleasure either in infancy or in adolescence. The only true exception in this culture sample is the headhunting Jivaro tribe of South America". In the latter case, the Jivaro belief system may play an important role, for these Indians have a "deep-seated belief that killing leads to the acquisition of souls which provide a supernatural power conferring immunity from death" (Harner, 1962).

Prescott also examined the influence of extramarital sex taboos upon crime and violence. The data clearly indicated that punitive-repressive attitudes toward extramarital sex were linked with physical violence, personal crime, and the practice of slavery. Societies which value monogamy also tend to emphasize military glory and worship aggressive gods.

These cross-cultural findings thus support the thesis that deprivation of body pleasure throughout life - but particularly during the formative periods of infancy, childhood, and adolescence - are very closely related to the amount of warfare and interpersonal violence.
It has been noted time and again that peaceable communities generally manifest an enormous gusto for concrete physical pleasure - eating, drinking, sex, laughter - and they generally make little distinction between the ideal characters of men and women. Particularly, they seem to lack the ideal of brave, aggressive, macho-type masculinity. As Glad (1990) expressed it: "Each, in short, sees sexual differences as interesting and enjoyable facts of life rather than heroic roles which must be achieved".

Related to the component of anti-hedonism in violent societies, McConahay & McConahay (1977) investigated the possible relationships between sexual permissiveness, sex role rigidity, and violence at the societal level, using a random sample of 17 cultures chosen from the Human Relations Area File.

Do societies that make love refrain from making war? The data show that some do and some don’t. Across the 17 cultures the correlation between sexual permissiveness and violence did not differ significantly from zero ($\rho = -.17$). Furthermore, a scattergram of the two variables did not reveal any apparent nonlinear relationships. Though McConahay & McConahay were unable to test Gorer’s (1968) hypothesis that aggressive masculinity would be positively correlated with violence, they were able to test a second hypothesis derived from Gorer’s theory.

As predicted, sex-role rigidity and violence were significantly positively correlated ($\rho = +.70$). Distinguishing between intra- and extracommunal types of violence did not materially affect the results.

Sexual permissiveness and sex-role rigidity were not related in their sample. The one statistically significant correlation that emerges from this study is the positive relationship between sex-role rigidity and violence. This finding is similar to one by Divale & Harris (1976). Using a nonrandom (though larger) sample, they found significant correlations between the extent to which a tribe or society engaged in warfare and measures of the extent of gender inequality. They hypothesized that inequality was caused by warfare. This theory suggests the hypothesis that the correlation the McConahays found between rigidity (which was also inequality) and violence was the result of increasing levels of violence causing a culture to become rigid in its sex roles in order to deal with the violence. Societies with a great deal of violence, in this conception, must have rigid sex roles in order to survive outside attack and to prevent internal violence from tearing them apart. On the other hand, it may be that the strains generated by sex-role rigidity cause males (who engage in most internal and external violence) to behave more aggressively. This was the assumed direction of causation in Gorer’s (1968) hypothesis.

However, the most likely explanation for the positive correlation between sex-role rigidity and violence, according to McConahay & McConahay, is that both were caused by some other factor. Sex-role rigidity may be a special case of a more general pattern of rigid social and caste stratification in a society, and
this stratification may also be accompanied by (or may even necessitate) internal and external violence (e.g., Dollard, 1937).

Similarly, Fromm (1973), in an effort to show that aggressiveness is not just one trait, but part of a syndrome (in other words, that aggression is to be understood as part of the social character, not as an isolated behavioral trait), analyzed 30 primitive cultures from the point of view of ‘aggressiveness’ versus peacefulness. His analysis resulted in the distinction of three different and clearly delineated social systems:

**System A: Life-affirmative societies**
In this system the main emphasis of ideals, customs and institutions is that they serve the preservation and growth of life in all its forms. There is a minimum of hostility, violence, or cruelty among people, no harsh punishment, hardly any crime, and the institution of war is absent or plays an exceedingly small role. Children are treated with kindness, there is no severe corporal punishment; women are in general considered equal to men, or at least not exploited or humiliated; there is a generally permissive and affirmative attitude toward sex. There is little envy, covetousness, greed, and exploitativeness. There is also little competition and individualism and a great deal of cooperation; personal property is only in things that are used. There is a general attitude of trust and confidence, not only in others but particularly in nature; a general prevalence of good humor, and a relative absence of depressive moods. Differences in socioeconomic structure of these societies do not seem to play a critical role in their character formation.
This category comprised 8 societies (Aranda, Arapesh, Bathonga, Mbutu, Polar Eskimo, Semang, Toda, and Zuñi).

**System B: Nondestructive-aggressive societies**
This system shares with the first the basic element of not being destructive, but differs in that aggressiveness and war, although not central, are normal occurrences, and in that competition, hierarchy, and individualism are present. These societies are by no means permeated by destructiveness or cruelty or by exaggerated suspiciousness, but they do not have the kind of gentleness and trust which is characteristic of the system A societies. System B could perhaps be best characterized by stating that it is imbued with a spirit of male aggressiveness, individualism, the desire to get things and accomplish tasks.
This category comprised 14 societies (Ainu, Bachiga, Crow, Dakota, Greenland Eskimo, Hottentots, Ifugao, Inca, Kazak, Manus, Maori, Ojibwa, Samoans, and Tasmanians).

**System C: Destructive societies**
The structure of the system C societies is very distinct. It is characterized by much interpersonal violence, destructiveness, aggression, and cruelty, both
within the tribe and against others, a pleasure in war, maliciousness, and treachery. The whole atmosphere of life is one of hostility, tension, and fear. Usually there is a great deal of competition, great emphasis on private property, strict hierarchies, and a considerable amount of war-making. This category comprised 6 societies (Aztec, Dobus, Ganda, Haida, Kwakiutl, and Witoto). Two societies, Hopi and Iroquois, Fromm could not classify.

Palmer (1965) combined homicidal and suicidal acts as destructive acts and compared their incidence in 40 primitive societies. He found 22 of them with low and medium aggressiveness versus 18 with high aggressiveness. Although this a higher percentage of very aggressive societies than Fromm (1973) found, nevertheless, Palmer's analysis does not confirm the thesis of the extreme aggressiveness of primitive peoples.

2.11.7.3 Combative Sports and Games
As already mentioned, combative sports and games are correlates of belligerence in primitive societies (Textor, 1967). A subsequent cross-cultural study by Sipes (1973; 1975) shows that where we find warlike behavior, we typically find combative sports and where war is relatively rare, combative sports tend to be absent.

Sipes (1975) presents the following model to account for the prevalence of warlike societies and the similar prevalence of combative sports:

(1) The primary requirement of a society is survival of its critical members and of the society as a group.

(2) Cultures are modified, at least sometimes, to fit the survival requirements of the social and natural environments. If this does not happen to a culture when it is required, the carrier society does not survive.

(3) A society often is threatened by ambient societies. This is especially true if the other societies are proficient at and prepared for warfare and are willing to engage in it.

(4) A society proficient at and prepared for warfare and willing to engage in it, other things being equal, has a greater chance of survival than a society not proficient, ready and willing. This amounts to sociocultural selection for warlike societies.

(5) The state of being proficient at and prepared for warfare and willing to engage in it presupposes the existence in the society of those values and behaviors required for such action. These conceptually distinguishable core traits include, but are not limited to, willingness to engage in actions capable of physically harming another human, willingness to take risks with one’s own safety, interest in vanquishing an opponent, and aggressiveness.

(6) Sports are highly susceptible to diffusion of values and behaviors from the military sphere of activity because of: (a) the relatively high and enduring critical uncertainty of military activity and the (b) relatively low survival contribution, (c) great flexibility, (d) lack of core requirements, (e) readily
achieved similarity of warfare, and (f) predominantly masculine orientation of sports. The prevalence of combative sports in the world, therefore, is the consequence of a selection for warlike societies and is not a manifestation of 'innate' aggression (Sipes, 1975).

Worchel (1974) predicted that societies that were restrictive in allowing individuals to express hostility would be more likely than nonrestrictive societies to supply formal sanctioned outlets for aggression. Data (65 societies) were obtained from Horton’s (1943) classification. Measures of warfare and games of physical skill were defined as sanctioned outlets for aggression. Worchel’s results support the prediction, though not necessarily his theorizing.

2.11.7.4 Matrilocality/Patrilocality, Feuding and Warfare

A classical example of a matriloc and 'Appolonian' culture is the Puebloan. Ellis (1951) has noted of Pueblo warfare: "Beyond protection, warfare served to provide legitimate outlet for the frustrations and aggressions arising from unpermitted competition or suspicions thereof among peoples of the same general culture". Based on his study of the Mundurucu, Murphy (1957) proposed as a statistically testable hypothesis that matrilocal societies must repress open aggression in order to insure cohesion and continuity. He notes that not all matrilocal groups repress aggression to the same extent as do the Mundurucu, nor are they as warlike. The greater emphasis of the Mundurucu upon social cohesion and external aggression stems from the existence of patrilineal clans in a matrilocal society. This factor combined with intervillage matrilocality, made hostility even more explosive and internal release systems less workable. It oriented the group toward warfare and provided the organization for its effective pursuit (See further § 5.2.7).

Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering (1960) formulated the following hypotheses, based on Murphy's observations:
(1) Violence occurs less frequently in matrilocal than in patrilocal societies;
(2) In matrilocal societies, in contrast to patrilocal societies, everything possible is done to prevent violence;
(3) In contrast to patrilocal societies, peacefulness in social relations is a principal value in matrilocal societies.

The authors used patrilocal residence as an index of the presence of fraternal interest groups because patrilocality results in a settlement pattern in which related males live near each other. Since fraternal interest groups are localized groups of related males, they can readily resort to concerted violent measures when the interests of their members are threatened.

Matrilocal residence, on the other hand, results in a social structural condition in which related males are scattered over a large area and are unable to readily support each other's interests.

Societies with fraternal interest groups are, hypothetically, more likely to have both feuding and internal war than societies without these power groups,
because such groups form small-scale military organizations that attack
enemies who are either members of the same or of a neighboring political
community within the cultural unit (Otterbein, 1968).
Paige & Paige (1981) propose a more refined version of fraternal interest group
theory, suggesting that fraternal interest groups will be particularly strong
when the resources males protect are significant, non-mobile and stable. Strong
fraternal interest groups are a structural arrangement making possible the rapid
mobilization of related males into fighting groups.

Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering selected a sample of 51 unstratified
societies, fairly evenly split between matrilocal and patrilocal groups, and rated
each one on the frequency of fighting, murder, blood feuds, sexual revenge
homicide, the separation of combatants in fights, and on the value set on
aversion to intrasocietal bloodshed. A combined index of (internal) peaceful-
ness showed a strong association with matrilocal residence ($\chi^2 = 26.5; p <
.001$). The authors interpret this finding as a confirmation of Murphy’s (1957)
hypothesis that relates matrilocality to intrasocietal peacefulness.
Murphy views the incompatible loyalties in terms of a quantity of aggression
which ’normally’ develops from the opposition of groups and which must, in
the matrilocal situation, be displaced onto other societies.
Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering, however, see most matrilocal societies as
lacking fraternal interest groups, and, hence, as lacking the opposition-caused
quantum of aggression. On the contrary, in their view it is the patrilocal
societies with their opposed fraternal interest groups that magnify what could
be minor interpersonal quarrels and homicides into group violence that affects
many individuals in the society. According to them, the patrilocal structure
generates aggression that never develops in the matrilocal societies rather than
the matrilocal groups’ having to repress it. Their position is more purely
structural than Murphy’s, eliminating any psychoanalytic assumptions
concerning the channeling of aggression (LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

Subsequently, Noberini (1966) tested the hypothesis that matrilocal societies
exhibit more outgroup hostility than patrilocal ones. She rated the 40 societies
from Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering’s sample on which information was
available on a scale of external warfare frequency devised by Naroll, and found
an association between matrilocality and warfare ($\chi^2 = 3.88; p < .05$)
supporting Murphy’s hypothesis that the cross-cutting ties of matrilocal
societies cause a displacement of aggression from the ethnic ingroup onto
foreigners.

Otterbein & Otterbein (1965), in a cross-cultural study of 50 societies, found a
relation between the frequency of blood feud and patrilocal residence, indexed
by the presence or absence of fraternal interest groups. This lends additional
support to Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering’s hypothesis concerning fraternal interest groups, but it is also consistent with Murphy’s formulation (LeVine & Campbell, 1972). The Otterbeins went on to measure the presence of fraternal interest groups in another way as well - through polygyny, on the assumption that the presence of polygyny makes internal feuding more likely. The Otterbeins found that polygyny is indeed positively related to the frequency of feuding and that polygyny and patrilocality together constitute a better predictive index of feuding than either alone.

Using Murdock’s levels of political integration (based on the size of politically integrated population units), Otterbein & Otterbein (1965) divided their sample into societies high and low on political integration. They found no support for the hypothesis that the higher the level of political complexity the less frequent is internal feuding. The relations of patrilocality and polygyny were somewhat stronger among societies low on political integration than among societies high on it. For the hypothesis that societies that frequently engage in war with their neighbors are less likely to have feuding than societies that have peaceful external relations, the Otterbeins found no support ($\Phi = .04$) when the whole sample was used, but strong support ($\Phi = -.48$) when societies high on political integration are taken separately, and a relation inverse of that predicted ($\Phi = +.44$) when societies of low political integration are taken by themselves.

These findings contain several surprises. First, feuding is not significantly less frequent among the societies of larger-scale political integration, so that a simple relation between widening of political units and the suppression of internal feuding is not confirmed (at least in this study). Another important surprise is that the ‘Real-threat-causes-ingroup-solidarity’ paradigm (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; See also Ch. 6) works for ‘states’ but not ‘stateless’ societies; among the latter, it is the more war, the more feuding. The Otterbeins explain this by stating that in stateless societies the threat of warfare from outside cannot be translated into a cessation of feuding because there are no superordinate officials to intervene effectively to stop feuding.

In subsequent publications, reporting a study of ‘internal war’ (between culturally similar groups) in a different sample of 50 societies, Otterbein (1968a,b) gives results that differ from, but do not contradict, the ones reported above. The results show no association between internal and external war (between political communities not culturally similar) for centralized or uncentralized political systems. Centralized political systems are just as likely to be characterized by feuding and internal war as uncentralized political systems. But when the relationship between fraternal interest groups and internal war is controlled for level of political complexity, a significant difference occurs between uncentralized and centralized political systems. Fraternal interest groups were found to be a factor
directly influencing the frequency of internal war only in uncentralized political systems. In centralized political systems the presence of fraternal interest groups was inversely related to internal war. In other words, LeVine & Campbell (1972) conclude, when the ingroup is defined in terms of cultural similarity rather than political community, the syndrome of internal solidarity-external hostility in centralized political systems does not hold up. This suggests that political boundaries are more salient than ethnic or cultural boundaries as organizers of military activity.

Wheeler (1974; cf. White, 1989) also coded frequencies of internal war, using Otterbein’s criteria. She found Continual Internal War in 17 cases; Frequent Internal War in 54 cases; Infrequent Internal War in 89 cases; with 26 cases unascertained. She also tabulated the frequency of offensive external war and found Continual Offensive External War in 31 cases; Frequent Offensive External War in 61 cases; Infrequent Offensive External War in 65 cases; with 29 cases unascertained. Wheeler’s study is the only one which tried to ascertain quantitatively the value of war for the societies involved. In 72 societies war was enjoyed and considered to have a high value; in 51 societies war was considered to be a necessary evil; in 23 societies war was consistently avoided and denounced; with 40 cases unascertained.

Harrison (1973) has argued that a case can be made to support the hypothesis that matrilocal groups may have been the result of warring activities for some groups. Within matrilocal groups women form the stable core of the social group. One of the conditions in which men would not be as predictably certain and available to the group as the women would be when the men of the society were engaged in fighting extensive wars beyond the boundaries of their communal locations. Such wars might be offensive rather than defensive ones. Thus, he concludes, matrilocality is no indication that a society is more peaceful than another which exhibits different modes of social organization.

2.11.7.5 Social-Structural and Psychocultural Dispositions
In an ongoing series of studies, Ross (1985 et seq.) attempts to build a general theory of violent conflict, based on a sample of 90 preindustrial societies. In particular, he empirically tests hypotheses derived from structural and psychocultural explanations of violent conflict. The structural view accounts for patterns of conflict in terms of competing interests that develop in particular forms of social and economic organization. The contrasting view, the psychocultural theories, explain violent conflict as a result of both culturally learned dispositions and interpretations of the world typical in a society. Interestingly, his statistical results are consistent with both explanations for internal and external conflict. Even more interesting is his attempt to integrate the two to form a general theory of conflict behavior. His argument is that psychocultural dispositions, rooted in early learning
experiences and crucial in creating commonly held images of the self and others, determine a society’s overall level of conflict. But if psychocultural interpretations of the world lead to a certain propensity for disputing, they do not tell us very precisely who argues, contests, and fights with whom. Here the structural features of the social, economic, and political system are crucial in determining the people with whom one cooperates and with whom one fights, whether they are within one’s society, in another society, or both.

Structural hypotheses link conflict to the interests associated with particular forms of social and economic organization and suggest ways in which the structure of a society creates interests directing conflict in particular directions (cf. Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Colson, 1953; Coleman, 1957; Gluckman, 1963; Beals & Siegel, 1966; Fried, 1967). Different theories, which can be placed in two major groups, identify a wide range of social structural elements as central. Cross-cutting ties theories (overlapping reference groups, kinship and marriage alliances, residence patterns, intercommunity trade, fraternal interest groups) explain conflict and conflict management in terms of the nature of links between different members of a society. Socioeconomic and political complexity theories, in contrast, give a primary role to the competing (group) interests associated with a society’s level of socioeconomic and/or political organization in accounting for conflict behavior. Whereas cross-cutting theories focus on the common interests formed through interaction and exchange, complexity theories emphasize competing and incompatible interests and the tensions that result from them.

If structural explanations for conflict, violence, and warfare focus on how the organization of society shapes action, psychocultural explanations look to a very different place: the actors themselves. Psychocultural explanations emphasize conflict behavior as a consequence of actor interpretations arising from their internal images and perceptions of their external social worlds. Psychocultural theorists draw attention to culturally shared notions about trust, self-esteem, and identity, and how people define and defend each of these in light of specific events.

Early socialization influences adult behavior by shaping the personality of the individual (Whiting & Child, 1953; Harrington & Whiting, 1972) as well as the cognitions that prepare individuals for patterns of conflict and cooperation in their society. Psychodynamic theories, beginning with Freud’s Civilization and its Discontents (1930), provide several key hypotheses relevant to internal violence and external warfare. Perspectives that are more social-psychological also attribute a role to social, economic, and political conditions while identifying different underlying mechanisms.

**Harsh socialization:** Several psychological approaches - psychoanalytic theory, social learning theory, and frustration-aggression theory - associate harsh and severe child-training practices with later aggressiveness. Although the
mechanisms underlying each of the theories are different, the predictions are similar (Zigler & Child, 1969). For example, where psychoanalytic and frustration-aggression theory relate severe physical punishment of children to adult aggression through the mechanisms of externalization, projection and displacement of hostile feelings onto outgroups (Volkan, 1988), social learning theory explains the connection more in terms of imitation, modelling, and reinforcement. Several cross-cultural studies find a positive association between harsh socialization practices and physical aggression, bellicosity, or warfare (e.g., Levinson & Malone, 1980).

**Warmth and affection**: A second perspective emphasizes that love-oriented socialization practices involving high affection and warmth are associated with low violence and conflict in adulthood. Both conceptually and empirically there is good reason to see this dimension as independent of harsh child-training, not its inverse.

Healthy psychosocial development of the individual, in terms of early 'object relations' (internalized images of others based on early experiences) and of secure ties to parental figures, prepares the way for socially cooperative behavior later in life. The profiles of seven small-scale societies low on internal conflict and aggression present some good ethnographic examples of this pattern (Montagu, 1978). In these societies, great affection is frequently directed towards the child, whose overall feelings of security are high. Overt expression of aggression is discouraged, but not through physical punishment. Finally, these societies lack highly aggressive persons whom the child can imitate.

**Male gender identity conflict**: The Whitings use the term ‘protest masculinity’ to refer to the pattern which links uncertainty concerning gender identity to overt aggression (Whiting, 1965; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). In male-dominated cultures, where fathers are distant and aloof from their children, young boys develop especially strong bonds with their mothers. Intense psychological conflict may occur when boys later need to forsake such identifications to meet societal expectations of adult male behavior (Herdt, 1987). Males in such cultures may develop very ambivalent feelings towards females and tend to exhibit narcissistic personalities marked by a preoccupation with early developmental tasks, pride, and a desire for self-enhancement that frequently lead to aggressive actions (Slater & Slater, 1965).

Using multiple regression, Ross is able to show that both structural and psychocultural variables are significantly related to internal and external conflict and in combination they explain conflict better than either set of variables alone. Low affection, harsh socialization, and male gender identity conflict increase internal and external conflict and violence, but the specific structural factors which are associated with internal and external conflict differ. These results suggest a dispositional basis for aggression and violence rooted in early learning, while the selection of targets for aggression is shaped by the
structural features of a society. Internal conflict is higher in societies with few overlapping reference groups, and in uncentralized societies with strong fraternal interest groups. External conflict increases with socioeconomic complexity, and in uncentralized societies is higher where there are numerous overlapping reference groups and where there is a higher level of intracommunity marriage. If cross-cutting ties theory does better in explaining internal conflict and violence, complexity theory is stronger in the case of external conflict and warfare.

The results, however, are only partially supportive of the specific hypotheses concerning residence, marriage, and trade which have been found in earlier work. Marital endogamy, not exogamy as expected, is associated with higher external warfare in uncentralized societies, but no connection was found between endogamy and internal conflict. Matrilocality, which a large number of previous studies identify as a crucial predictor of external warfare, is only weakly related to external conflict once the effect of the other variable in the model is taken into account. Similarly, patrilocality is not particularly related to internal violence and conflict in the multivariate model. The point is not so much that these residence variables are irrelevant to understanding patterns of violence and conflict, but rather that they do not operate in isolation and their effects need to be considered within the context of other structural and psychocultural variables.

2.11.7.6 Warfare Regulation in Primitive Societies

In a cross-cultural study of warfare regulation, Tefft (1975; Tefft & Reinhardt, 1974), using a sample of 58 societies, obtained the following results:

- Political communities which fight both internal and external wars primarily for conflict-oriented objectives have more frequent war than those which fight primarily for success-oriented objectives. However, such differences are statistically significant only for external war (‘Conflict-oriented’ here means ‘war for glory’).
- Destruction brought about by warfare is not a deterrent to war. The loss of material possessions as well as lives may merely generate desires for revenge. If warfare results in extreme destructiveness it may also generate fear. Fear creates mistrust and serves to undermine in one community’s view the legitimacy of the goals of the other. Such a situation also generates misunderstanding, anger, counter-violence, fear, and lack of trust. Under these circumstances successful collaboration and negotiation are immeasurably more difficult (Ilfeld & Metzner, 1970; Tefft, 1975).
- The fact that political communities share a similar culture does not deter war.
- Political communities with an advanced military capacity may be more
inclined to use threat and intimidation against other communities perceived as being hostile to their interests. Such threats only serve to intensify group polarization and mistrust. Such communities are more likely to use intermittent "shows of force" (raids, ceremonial combat to demonstrate their own strength, etc.) in the belief that it is necessary to deter the enemy from possible aggression against themselves. Thus warfare may be intensified.

- The extensiveness of social ties is not a factor promoting peace. Intermarriage combined with economic and religious ties between political communities makes them no less likely to engage in frequent war than those with only kinship ties.
- Peace pacts which result from direct negotiation do not establish a more durable peace than pacts resulting from other peacemaking procedures.
- Interchange of membership through intermarriage does not seem to reduce substantially the frequency of war or to further peaceful relations between political communities. Insofar as internal war is concerned, political communities with numerous kinship ties war more frequently than those with fewer ties. This is not entirely surprising since internal wars are often fought over issues growing out of intermarriage (i.e., default of bridewealth, adultery, etc.). More significant is the fact that political communities which have important economic ties with one another fight internal wars less frequently than those whose ties are primarily one of kinship. Economic ties create more mutuality of interest and less division than kinship ties at the tribal level. However, neither kinship nor economic ties create strong enough bonds of mutual interest to prevent external war.

Tefft concludes that existing peace theories do not provide adequate explanations for the different frequencies of warfare between bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and small states. They do not provide a coherent theoretical framework by which we can predict how the interrelated variations in techno-environmental and techno-economic factors, population levels, military organization, and military objectives affect the frequency of warfare.

In a series of cross-cultural tests Kang (1976, 1979) compared levels of feuding in exogamous and nonexogamous societies and she, too, found no support for the thesis that exogamy leads to peace between the exogamous units. Feuding appears to be reduced only when fraternal interest groups are dispersed through matrilocal residence and other forms of nonpatrilocal residence.

The classical exogamy theorists Tylor (1888), Lévi-Strauss (1949, 1956), White (1949, 1959), and Service (1962) all reasoned that given feuds among groups of related males, intermarriage would ameliorate conflict and create the possibility of alliance.

From this perspective, Kang has not disconfirmed the pacifying effect of
exogamy but simply confirmed the operation of a second pacifying mechanism: matrilocaliry. Thus, while some human societies consistently 'marry their enemies' (e.g., Berndt, 1964; Hayano, 1973; Black-Michaud, 1975), most patrilocal groups are at least temporarily allied through affinal ties (Rodseth et al., 1991).

2.11.7.7 Resource Unpredictability, Mistrust, and War
Multivariate analysis suggests that one kind of ecological problem - a history of unpredictable natural disasters - strongly predicts higher frequencies of war among primitive peoples (Ember & Ember, 1992). By unpredictable natural disasters is meant events that destroy food resources, such as droughts, floods, storms, frosts, and locust infestations. Multivariate analysis also suggests another independent, but weaker, predictor of higher warfare frequencies, namely, socialization for mistrust (Ember & Ember, 1994). Ember & Ember suggest that both of these factors create fear - fear of nature and fear of others - which may lead people to try to protect themselves against future unpredictable disasters by going to war to take resources from enemies.

Using the Murdock & White (1969) sample of 186 societies, Ember & Ember found that threat of natural disasters significantly predicted warfare frequency, particularly in primitive societies ($\rho = .71$). Chronic scarcity is significantly, but not strongly, related to warfare frequency in nonstate societies ($\rho = .35$). Thus, these results suggest that resource problems, particularly nonchronic resource problems created by natural disasters, predict more war. The evidence also strongly suggests that socialization for aggression is more likely to be a consequence than a cause of war. The major finding consistent with this scenario is that socialization for aggression seems to decrease after warfare ceases because of pacification.

The presence of war and the need to produce effective warriors may also be the major cause of intragroup violence: homicide and assault (Ember & Ember, 1994). Sexual frustration does not seem to be involved: Sexual restrictiveness does not appear to predict more war, according to this study. Societies that restrict their children sexually (codes from Barry et al., 1976) do not appear more warlike, nor does premarital sexual restrictiveness (codes from Broude & Green, 1976) predict more war.

It looks like the people who go to war more or less constantly, the Embers explain, may be trying not to cover present or regularly recurring shortages, but to protect themselves against future disasters that they cannot predict; they seem to be trying to protect themselves ahead of time by taking resources from enemies. It seems then that the main motive for going to war is the fear of future loss, not current deprivation.

If it is correct to assume that future loss is the main motive for going to war, it makes sense that chronic scarcity does not predict war. First, chronic scarcity
annual shortages) may nor be as harmful or lethal as natural disasters that destroy food supplies. Second, chronic scarcity may be psychologically easier to deal with than threat of natural disasters because chronic scarcity is predictable. If you know there will be some ‘hungry’ months, you can prepare yourself emotionally. But the threat of natural disasters, which occur rarely and unpredictably, may be so frightening a possibility that people might attempt to protect themselves against it by going to war even though they or loved one could die in the attempt.

Thus, the tentative theory of war Ember & Ember are suggesting here is that war is mostly caused by a fear of unpredictable natural disasters and a partially resultant fear of others.

2.11.7.8 Peace between Participatory Policies

A theoretical tradition as old as Immanuel Kant’s essay on perpetual peace asserts that democratic states are unlikely to fight each other. As an empirical statement about dyadic relations, the proposition that democracies are generally at peace with each other is strongly supported. The literature on this topic is now very substantial (see Ember, Ember & Russett [1992] and Russett, Ember & Ember [1993] for references). Why there should be a relationship between democracy and pacifism is still a matter of hot debate.

As the term democracy has little relevance for preindustrial societies, Ember, Ember & Russett attempted to translate it to the nearest equivalent for purposes of cross-cultural examination. Their revised hypothesis is that political units with wider political participation engage in less warfare with one another than do less participatory political units.

The statistical results are strong and robust, despite the relatively small sample and the difficulties in measuring the variable to minimize random error. Participatory institutions contribute to reducing the frequency of internal warfare, but in many of these cases the institutions as such are weak. More important, therefore, may be a culture wherein people perceive that they and others have the opportunity to participate widely in political decision making. If these institutions and cultures can be characterized as ‘democratic’ in a meaningful way - and the authors believe they can, even allowing for the very different circumstances - we have one more piece of evidence to support the proposition that democratically governed people are less likely to fight one another than are autocratically governed peoples.
2.11.7.9 Fear and Inducement to Military Participation

Why do men fight? Why do men leave the comfort and security of ordinary life to engage in an activity that has been described as long stretches of tedium interspersed with moments of terror? This is a different question from "Why warfare?" - an issue many anthropologists have addressed with different success (and which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapters). Here we are asking: Why do individuals willingly undertake such unpleasant, life-threatening activity?

The sample (n = 27) used by Goldschmidt (1988, 1989) was, with a few exceptions, taken from those primitive societies that had high scores on military involvement as established by Ross (1983) from the Standard Ethnographic Sample.

Only a few ethnographers describe in detail the training of soldiers, but many give certain specifics. In Goldschmidt’s sample, six mentioned training in skills, seven apprenticeship in warfare, and seven games and contests designed to establish military qualities. Youths were made to endure pain in twelve societies and endurance of other hardships in nine. Legends and stories designed to reinforce militaristic attitudes were mentioned in seven instances. Thus, most societies consciously inculcate military virtues in some ways.

Where ethnographers have investigated the matter directly, we find elaborate socialization and training for the warriors. For example, the Apache (Baldwin, 1965; Opler, 1937, 1941); Jivaro (Karsten, 1935; Stirling, 1938), and Mae Enga (Meggitt, 1977). Such descriptions make it clear that it takes a major effort to make fierce, aggressive warriors out of tribal children. When Ember & Ember (1984) examined the social and psychological correlates to warfare in primitive societies, the only significant relationship with intensity of warfare they found was the socialization and training of boys for aggressiveness. Goldschmidt summarizes the findings of his investigation by presenting a perceptive scenario of inducement to military participation among war-infested tribal societies:

Youths from early onward are inculcated with the virtues of warfare and the need to be brave and aggressive. Despite the reiteration of such sentiments, they dread the actual battle, and to overcome such fear they engage in diverse religious (i.e., psychologically supportive) practices, ranging from talismans to drugs, and including the mob psychology induced by rituals of preparation for war. Even these are not always able to counteract the fear in their hearts, and many find excuses for avoiding combat, keeping as much self-respect intact as they can (e.g., Abipon: Dobrizhoffer, 1822; Creek: Adair quoted in Swanton, 1928; Mae Enga: Meggitt, 1977; Yanomamó: Chagnon, 1977).

Yet engage in war they do. And if they do not fall in battle, they return with booty, women, slaves, scalps, cattle, tales of their exploits, and,
above all, honor. As these accumulate with each successive encounter, they find themselves increasingly attractive to the women, respected by the men, and influential in the community - providing, in passing, a model for their nephews and sons.

Such a scenario does not support the perception of man as naturally aggressive and violent. It suggests rather that the potential for aggressiveness and violence must be carefully reinforced, nurtured, and channeled.

These data suggest that the human capacity to fight rests more firmly on other - paradoxically, more social - attributes: pride and empathy. By pride is meant the concern with the public image of the self. This urge toward performance in accordance with the dictates of the community leads individuals to engage in those forms of behavior that society sees as admirable. The ethnographic literature indicates that this human attribute can lead people into very diverse courses of action - from celibacy to machismo; from self-abrogation to aggressive exploitation; from indolence to industriousness. It is a sentiment that is self-oriented, but significantly takes its form from other-directedness, since the qualities that enter into the behavior are set by the community. Empathy is the obverse of this coin; the identification with others. It is this identification with the group - family, clan, tribe, or nation - that transforms individual action into community action, that transforms fighting into warfare. These two attributes manifestly are interrelated and together they make warfare possible. Personal self-image and social identification constitute the basic reasons why men fight (Goldschmidt, 1988, 1989).

2.11.8 Epilogue

The macroquantitative and cross-cultural studies have shattered a number of popular theories and hypotheses (e.g., the deterrence hypothesis, the agent-of-progress hypothesis, the natural-aggressiveness-of-man, etc.), and rejected a number of other popular misconceptions.

One of the most consistent and robust findings is the correlation between 'primitivity' and absence of war or low-level warfare, or in other words, the correlation between war and civilization.

One of the more 'counterintuitive' findings emerging from these quantitative studies concerns the role of fear (rather than 'aggression') in the etiology of human warfare.